




Speech By
Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

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CROSS RIVER RAIL DELIVERY AUTHORITY BILL

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (10.36 pm): Cross River Rail is shovel-ready. Who said that? That would be the Premier when she was opposition leader in 2013. It could create thousands of jobs straightaway, she said. It is a ready to proceed project, the Premier said in 2012 when she was the transport minister. Labor's track record on Cross River Rail is one of dithering, delaying and denial. It is a project that has floundered under Labor—first under the Premier when she was the project minister and now under an inexperienced Deputy Premier. The only saving grace is that the Deputy Premier stripped the bungling transport minister of any involvement in the project. I guess South-East Queensland and Queensland can thank her for that.

It took the Deputy Premier until August 2013 to put out any media statements about Cross River Rail. When she did, what did she say? Was there any movement on her claimed No. 1 priority? No. What the Deputy Premier did was rip out the bus component from the LNP's plan. The Deputy Premier pressed reset on the project and began yet another business case—reviewing, not doing. What that means is that the government not only has no plan to deal with the congestion on the north coast rail duplication, or any other rail line for that matter, but also has no plan to deal with serious bus congestion here in Brisbane—congestion that is happening right now.

We only need to look at Victoria Bridge every morning or afternoon to see the buses lined up bumper to bumper. That needs a solution now, not later. Thousands of commuters every day get stuck in bus traffic trying to cross the Brisbane River. When Lord Mayor Graham Quirk puts forward a proposal to fix Brisbane's busways, what does this government say? The Premier told the Lord Mayor to ditch his metro style plan. The arrogance of this government! That is typical of this Palaszczuk Labor government. They rely on others to solve their problems and then rubbish them when they do. Someone else has to come up with a solution to fix the problem of bus congestion—congestion that will be made worse by the Deputy Premier when she cuts the bus component of the BaT tunnel—and the Palaszczuk Labor government bags the Brisbane City Council. The government says, 'Go away, we don't want to hear about it.'

Instead, since April this year, this government have been doing what they do best—nothing. Sorry, they did say that they would set up the Cross River Rail Delivery Authority, but then they reverted to self again and did nothing—until now, and only now because the Deputy Premier had to be reminded by the *Courier-Mail* that she had forgotten to set up the delivery authority she had promised. The Deputy Premier was shamed into drafting legislation, tabling it in this place and rushing it through the committee process, allowing only a few days for concerned stakeholders to make submissions.

Based on the responses received by that truncated committee process and as the shadow minister for local government, I am concerned about this government swooping in and usurping the responsibilities and powers of councils. Let me quote from the submission made by the Brisbane City Council CEO, Colin Jensen. He said—

Council is seriously concerned about the proposal to expand the authority of the Queensland Government in the city's planning. The city is currently experiencing an unprecedented level of Queensland Government planning intervention via the combination of mechanisms including Priority Development Areas (PDAs), State planning regulatory provisions, ministerial call ins and ministerial directions. The city is at risk of becoming a two speed development environment. This approach is not sustainable.

Ms Grace: This is about the 10th time.

Mr POWELL: I take that interjection from the member for Brisbane Central. It may be the 10th time she has heard it, but she is clearly not listening. For the Brisbane City Council to have these concerns and for these concerns to be ignored shows that those members, like the members for Yeerongpilly and Brisbane Central, do not care what the Brisbane City Council is trying to achieve here in inner Brisbane and indeed for the benefit of South-East Queensland commuters as a whole. This encroachment on council turf is worrying. We saw last night that this government has no qualms about kicking councils when they are down, forcing job losses on them. I am also concerned about: the lack of transparency regarding the business case for the Cross River Rail project which is stifling public debate about this \$16 billion project; the interventionist approach to planning which is causing uncertainty and inconsistency; and the secrecy about how this government will fund the Cross River Rail project, including the use of value capture under delegated powers from the minister.

Let me be clear. The LNP knows there is a need for a second river rail crossing here in Brisbane. As the member for Glass House, I know that my constituents need the second river rail crossing. We also know commuters are fed up with being stuck on buses as Brisbane city streets choke up. The solution must be affordable and value for money. In its current form, Labor's Cross River Rail raises concerning questions about cost, funding and value. We will do what this government will not; we will work collaboratively with our council and federal colleagues for a value-for-money, holistic solution for Brisbane and South-East Queensland commuters. In the meantime, the message is simple for this asleep-at-the-wheel government—stop reviewing, start doing.