



Speech By
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MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Ipswich Electorate, State Infrastructure Plan

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (12.10 pm): I rise to congratulate the Premier, the Minister for Main Roads and the Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment on the release of the State Infrastructure Plan. I note the Queensland business community has already been out in force congratulating this government on its initiatives in preparing a plan for infrastructure, the first of its kind in more than three years. This is a government of action. We do not just sit back and wait for things to happen around us. We act.

Like the member for Ipswich West and the member for Bundamba, I was delighted to see that the upgrade of the last section of the Ipswich Motorway is included in the State Infrastructure Plan. I would also like to make special mention of the member for Blair, Shayne Neumann, who has been a tireless advocate for the whole Ipswich Motorway and who has been very vocal in the federal parliament. I point out for those who do not venture west very often that this section of the motorway, from Darra to Rocklea, is vital to our economy. It is the only means for western traffic to get to the Brisbane CBD. It is estimated that around 85,000 motorists sit in traffic every day on this section of the motorway.

When I was elected in January last year, I made a commitment to my constituents that I would fight to ensure that the Ipswich Motorway upgrade was completed. It was my top priority right from the start. I made this commitment because I know how important this road corridor is for my electorate. For too long this stretch of the road has been in need of dire attention.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Ms HOWARD: I was astounded to hear the opposition talking about this Infrastructure Plan yesterday. I will take the member for Lockyer's interjection. His constituents will also benefit enormously from this.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! I will ask members to direct their comments through the chair, please.

Ms HOWARD: The opposition were talking about this Infrastructure Plan yesterday. They said, 'The Palaszczuk government's Infrastructure Plan outlines nothing but rehashed, reused and recycled ideas.' I can tell the members opposite that the people of Ipswich do not think the \$200 million commitment to the Ipswich Motorway upgrade is rehashed. The people of Ipswich do not see this commitment to our most significant road connection as a recycled idea. The people of Ipswich are not complaining that this massive injection of money is a reused promise because it is not. There has been a lot of talk from those opposite, but not a lot of action. I can assure those opposite that the people of

my electorate are clapping their hands with glee at this announcement. I could show honourable members the front page of the *Queensland Times* from last week if they want proof of how happy the people of Ipswich are about this announcement. I have read the article and I do not seem to recall seeing the words rehashed, re-used or recycled once.

Let us look at the track record of those opposite when it comes to the Ipswich Motorway. The previous federal Labor government understood the importance of this road and made the Ipswich Motorway a priority by spending \$2.8 billion to complete the Dinmore to Darra section in 2012. The former federal Labor government then committed a further \$270 million to kickstart the last six kilometres from the Oxley roundabout. Then the newly elected federal coalition government came forward and said they would match any commitment from the Queensland government. To rub salt into the wound, in 2013 the then federal minister for infrastructure told us all that the upgrade of the final section of the Ipswich Motorway would be completed by the coalition government. That was wonderful news. It would have been wonderful for the people of the western corridor. Finally they would get some relief from this congestion. All we needed was for the Queensland government at the time to commit to the project and it would have happened. However, what did we see from the Queensland LNP government?

From 2012 to 2015 we saw nothing, not one dollar of commitment from that sad government to help complete the Ipswich Motorway. In fact, what we got was worse than nothing. In the 2014-15 Queensland budget the Ipswich Motorway was conspicuous by its absence and the then member for Ipswich was conspicuous in his contempt for his electorate. In a quote to the *Queensland Times*, the then member for Ipswich bemoaned the absence of the motorway upgrade but said that funding for the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing took precedence. This would have all been very well if it came from the member for Toowoomba, but it did not. The former member for Ipswich had the temerity to tell his constituents that their needs were less important than those of Toowoomba residents. 'I would love to finish the motorway off,' he said. But what did he actually do? Again, I say to this House that he, his colleagues and the former treasurer did nothing—nothing for his electorate, nothing for the people of the western corridor.

With this plan the Palaszczuk government—
(*Time expired*)