



Speech By
Robbie Katter

MEMBER FOR MOUNT ISA

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MOTION: ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE, FEDERAL FUNDING

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (5.39 pm): I am usually reluctant to make a contribution in these debates, but this one is close to my heart because I have been touched by this issue in my own electorate with a project that is very significant to me—the Hann Highway. I will use that as an example in this case. It is an outstanding issue at the moment. We have been lobbying for many years to finish the Hann Highway. About \$80 million to \$100 million is needed to finish the job. For about two years prior to the federal election there was money put up. I do not care who the federal government is—Liberal or Labor. It means nothing to me. There was money promised for years up until that point. I was getting deep criticism as the state member for not getting any state money for that road. I was told on numerous occasions that there was money from the federal government and that all we needed was for the state to act. I keep getting criticism in my electorate that I am not delivering because the money is not there from the state but we have the money from the feds.

We got the money from the state. We got the \$20 million from the state which was 20 per cent of the \$100 million. Then we got \$40 million from the feds. We were short-changed. With that little bit more we could finish the job. Both sides need to do their job. It has not been done in this case, which is enormously frustrating. It is even more so when I am told from the North Queensland ROC meeting last week that I have failed to deliver again because there is only \$7 million from the state. That was hearsay, it was rubbish and it was fed to that meeting, as an attack presumably upon me, from federal MPs who have been obligated up until that point to fill the gap on the Hann Highway.

I do not feel terribly motivated to criticise them for any shortfalls under normal circumstances, but I do not like being criticised when finally the state government has come to the table with the \$20 million but it is not matched with the commensurate obligation from the feds at 80 per cent. It is enormously frustrating when you have been dealing with an issue like this for a long time and when it is such a crisis area for outback Western Queensland. It is so disappointing to get so close but be pulled short.

This is a pretty emotive issue for Shane and me in that we have been touched by this. It behoves them—whoever is sitting in government in Canberra, whether Liberal or Labor—to make sure that they are doing their bit. I have no problem with forcing them to do that with the 80-20 rule. It is something that we both support very strongly.