




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA

Record of Proceedings, 17 February 2016

ADJOURNMENT

M1 Upgrade

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.40 am): In recent weeks traffic events, like a truck crashing on the M1 at Nerang and catching fire, which resulted in traffic grinding to a halt for hours on end in both directions, have reminded us of how we urgently need to invest in better roads for the Gold Coast. This issue is far from new. As members are all too aware, I have made countless speeches in this House and I have worked with my state and federal LNP and coalition colleagues since 2005 to secure urgently needed upgrades to the M1 to reduce congestion and improve safety. My tireless campaigning and, ultimately, my achievements in securing funding for that stretch of motorway that is in my electorate led to me being dubbed the 'Member for the M1' by the *Gold Coast Bulletin*.

It is as the 'Member for the M1' that I rise to take this opportunity to provide the House with a snapshot of the M1's recent past. In 2007, the Howard coalition government committed \$455 million to upgrade the M1 from Nerang to Coolangatta, which was allocated under a fifty-fifty funding arrangement with the state government. I was proud to stand with the then deputy prime minister, Mark Vaile, as he made this announcement.

Since then, I have campaigned for and secured M1 upgrades from exit 73 at Carrara to exit 82 at Robina, including massive upgrades to a number of interchanges. With these upgrades now complete, the federal funding provided by the coalition in 2007 has now been spent entirely. Throughout the entire tenure of the Rudd-Gillard-Rudd Labor government, not one cent was allocated for further upgrades of the M1, despite the Howard government money being re-announced in every subsequent Labor budget.

In 2012, the then LNP state government requested funding to continue upgrading the M1 from exit 82 at Robina to exit 85 at Reedy Creek. Unfortunately, this application was ignored by the Gillard Labor government. I would have hoped that this Labor government, which came to power last year with no plan of its own, would have continued the good work of the LNP government and submitted another application for federal funding to upgrade the M1. Unfortunately, all we ended up with was a bumbling, fumbling Minister for Main Roads who forgot to ask for federal funding before the 2014-15 federal budget. In fact, it was not until almost a year after taking office that the Labor government finally mentioned the M1 in its Infrastructure Australia submission.

I have been advised by the Department of Transport and Main Roads that there is no intention of starting the upgrade of the M1 from exit 82 to exit 85 until after the Commonwealth Games. That will mean that southern Gold Coast residents will be stuck in gridlock until 2020.

I will be watching this year's budget with interest to see if the state government will match the previous fifty-fifty funding. People on the Gold Coast are not going to be stuck in gridlock until 2020. It is absolutely ridiculous. The roadworks can be done through the median, like all the other roadworks were, and traffic can continue. Queenslanders are quickly realising that this do-nothing, frozen-at-the-wheel Labor government has plenty of plans to do nothing.