



Speech By  
**Craig Crawford**


**MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER**

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**MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Governing from the Regions, Far North Queensland**

 **Mr CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (12.06 pm): During the week of 9 July to 14 July, the tropical North Queensland region was proud to host the Queensland cabinet while it governed from North Queensland. I cannot think of a better way to allow the government to communicate with the region. Community cabinets are good, but governing for a week in the city is even better. Why? It allows for longer stays and provides for better engagement and the opportunity for ministers to soak up the issues and opportunities in the region. There were plenty of opportunities in the Far North. Whether it was ministers visiting communities in Cape York, for whom they are champions, departmental meetings being conducted in Cairns, or representations from interested parties being received, it is the best way for regional communities to have their say with cabinet. The feedback from the Cairns community has been outstanding.

The highlights of governing from Cairns included the announcement of the Cairns Shipping Development Project, which removes one million cubic metres of capital dredge spoil and the on-land disposal arrangements. This is a significant win for Cairns, as previous governments have struggled to find a balance between meeting our environmental obligations to the world for the Great Barrier Reef and our economic obligations to Cairns to bring mega-classed cruise ships into our city. Our government has found that balance. The plan is sorted, the funds are sorted and the future of cruise shipping in Cairns is secure. We are yet to see the LNP's plan. I cannot wait to see what it proposes. Maybe it will succumb to the call of their supporters for a four million cubic metre mountain and the destruction of East Trinity.

On Wednesday, 12 July, the motorists of the Barron River electorate woke up to read the front page of the *Cairns Post*, which announced that the Palaszczuk government is building the Smithfield bypass and has committed \$100 million towards it. The Smithfield bypass is a 3.8-kilometre new road that will be built to divert traffic flow away from the suburb of Smithfield and relieve pressure on the Smithfield roundabout—a roundabout that has been under increasing pressure. All the north-south traffic between Cairns Airport and Palm Cove, Port Douglas, Trinity Beach, Kuranda, Cooktown and Mareeba has to pass through the Smithfield roundabout and often there is a lot of it. It has been stated that up to 90,000 cars and trucks per day move through that roundabout. There are near misses, bingles and traffic jams. Between 3 pm and 5 pm, sometimes the traffic is backed up three to four kilometres on the western arterial as it tries to merge on to the Captain Cook Highway just south of the Smithfield roundabout. Building Queensland rated the Smithfield bypass the best way to resolve the traffic woes at that roundabout and in that area. I thank the Premier and her cabinet for listening to both the people of the Barron River electorate and me, the people of the Cairns electorate, the people of the Cook electorate, our community leaders, our mayors and the department of main roads. The response from the Cairns community has been very positive. It has certainly become a daily topic of conversation in our communities.

A few weeks ago the leader of the LNP committed that they would also build Labor's Smithfield bypass if elected—just like Labor—and I welcome that. This comes a few weeks after he also said that they would commit to the \$176 million Cairns Convention Centre upgrade—just like Labor. There is no LNP plan to be seen yet, just a copying of Labor's ideas and commitments.

During the three years of the Newman government, with the member for Clayfield as the treasurer and Michael Trout as the member for Barron River, the LNP did not deliver one single road infrastructure project in my electorate—not one! They did not even try. They did not plan for one; they did not build one. During the 2015 election the LNP announced that if it was elected it would do the planning for the Bill Fulton Bridge. We went one better. We did not just plan for the Bill Fulton Bridge, we built it! That \$34 million bridge will be open this side of Christmas.

Those opposite had no plan. All they could do with their candidate up there was to promise a \$1.5 million plan. We delivered the \$34 million bridge that will be opened before Christmas and now we have got the \$152 million Smithfield bypass. Clearly Labor has the right plan. The LNP has nothing in Barron River. It will roll out the same old thing over and over again. Those opposite have no plan and no future in our area.