




Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

Record of Proceedings, 9 August 2017

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance; Cross River Rail

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.52 pm): Talk about a show about nothing! The words 'rail fail' have become synonymous with this Palaszczuk Labor government. In the true Labor tradition of gravy trains, trains without seats, trains too big for tunnels, 15 per cent on 15 per cent public transport fares and under the Palaszczuk government tunnels without trains, trains without drivers and 1,800 services cut a month, Labor's rail fail knows no bounds.

After lauding and citing Infrastructure Australia—an independent authority, let us not forget, set up by Labor—the member for South Brisbane was quick to react when it said, 'Sorry, Jackie, but Cross River Rail doesn't stack up.' Infrastructure Australia had independently assessed Labor's only infrastructure priority and said that the costs of the project are likely to exceed the benefits. That means that taxpayers lose money by building the project. Put simply, for every dollar put in there is less than \$1 of benefit for this project. When the project costs \$15 billion, that is bad news for Queenslanders. IA went on to say that rail patronage growth projections and the estimation of project benefits are unrealistically high.

This is what the LNP has questioned all along. There is no evidence that rail patronage will triple, yet Labor has used this as a key assumption in the secret Cross River Rail business case. There is no evidence that the Merivale Bridge will reach capacity in 2026. In fact, if we were to believe the previous projections, the Merivale Bridge would be at capacity right now and it is not. At \$15 billion it is too expensive for taxpayers all across Queensland to get it wrong. The LNP has always supported and recognised the future need of a second heavy rail crossing across the Brisbane River, but this is too important to rush. The LNP has rightly questioned \$15 billion from the start and now some crossbenchers have come to the party late and in fact supported the creation of the Cross River Rail Delivery Authority and voted in favour of last year's budget that set up the seed funding for this project. You cannot reallocate \$5.4 billion of funding that is not in the budget. On the back of media reports where we see billboards being erected in the 'People's Republic of South Brisbane', the truth about this project has been exposed. The only purpose of this project is to get the member for South Brisbane re-elected. The only priority is Jackie. The backbenchers know it. All of their electorates know it. This is a project to save her seat.