




Speech By
Tim Mander

MEMBER FOR EVERTON

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MOTION

Toll Roads

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (5.44 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion moved by my colleague the shadow minister for transport. We have learned two things from this debate tonight. The first is that the LNP leads and the ALP follows. There are so many examples over the last three or four years of us leading and those on the other side of the House following. If it was not four-year parliamentary terms, it was the plastic bag ban. If it was not the plastic bag ban, it was the Container Refund Scheme. If it was not the Container Refund Scheme, it was no-body no-parole. If it was not that, it was real-time fuel price monitoring, which we still have not seen implemented. This evening we have seen once again that they have followed our lead and realise that this inquiry is something the Queensland public, particularly those in the south-east corner, want.

The member for Moggill mentioned earlier that the government was eerily silent in the last two weeks when this was being debated in the media, when there were tens and tens of radio talkback calls about this issue. This is something that touches a nerve with the travelling public in the south-east corner. That is why those opposite now know that they have to come to the party, that they have to come out and listen to the public about the issues they have.

The other thing we have learned from this debate is that the Labor Party is in denial when it comes to privatisation. The only party that has privatised anything is the Labor Party. They did it with tollways, they did it with forestry and they did it with Central Queensland railways. Now the chickens are coming home to roost. Those opposite deny it. They want it to be wiped from history and say that it never happened, but we know that it happened and we will remind people time and time again. Those opposite are the ones who privatised the tollways, which has led to the situation we are now in.

The issue we have in the south-east corner is congestion. People are sick and tired of being jammed onto our clogged roads because of the lack of infrastructure planning by this government. I remind the House again that next year the Labor Party will have been in government for 25 of the last 30 years. An infrastructure crisis does not happen overnight; it is the result of a slow build-up, with years and years of underspending. Even in the last three or four years the spend has been ridiculously low and now those opposite are playing catch-up. This is another classic example.

People in the south-east corner—in Brisbane—are feeling it. Nobody wants to go through Everton Park because of the congestion there. People rat-run in other streets.

Dr Rowan interjected.

Mr MANDER: I take that interjection from the member for Moggill, who says that Moggill Road is the same. Samford Road, Waterworks Road and other roads on the north side of Brisbane are clogged because of the lack of infrastructure.

What is one of the solutions? We have wonderful infrastructure in the form of toll roads, brought in by an LNP administration, that are under-utilised. We need to get more cars and trucks onto tollways. One of the best and most effective ways to do that is to lower prices and make them more affordable. I was interested this morning to read the *Gold Coast Bulletin*. They did a survey to find out what it would take to get more people to use the trains from the Gold Coast to Brisbane. The result was cheaper fares. If the fare were \$10 or less, people would use the railways. The same principle applies to roads. We need to do something with the toll prices, for example create packages or offer discounts. When I was interviewed on talkback radio about this issue people rang in and said, 'We need to have this downstream peak hour to get people off the roads and onto the tollways.'

This parliamentary inquiry is something that the public wants. Members of the public want to give their opinion and they want less congestion in this city, and we want to give them that opportunity. I am heartened that the Labor government has finally listened not only to the people of Brisbane and South-East Queensland but also once again to the opposition. We appreciate that and we look forward to the inquiry.