



Speech By  
**Hon. Leeanne Enoch**


**MEMBER FOR ALGESTER**

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Record of Proceedings, 1 May 2019

## ADJOURNMENT

### Algerster Electorate, Inland Rail Project

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algerster—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (7.09 pm): For over two years now, my electorate of Algerster has had to fight to be taken seriously when it comes to the federal government's inland rail project. Nobody in our community wants to stand in the way of a nation-building project, but we want to be properly consulted. One would have thought that consultation would be a top priority for the federal government, but instead I had to formally request that the ARTC—the deliverer of the federal government project—conduct information sessions so the people of Algerster could speak directly with them. Unfortunately, those information sessions left residents more concerned than ever.

I have been writing to local residents, holding community barbecues and attending community meetings, and I know how important this issue has become for our community. In addition, I along with the members for Jordan and Logan advocated for the establishment of a community consultative committee so that residents had a forum to hold the ARTC to account. We had to lobby and agitate for a community consultative committee to be established so that local residents were afforded the same opportunity that every other community along the proposed line had been granted.

I have written to two different federal infrastructure ministers regarding the lack of consultation from the ARTC. In 2017 I wrote to the then minister, Darren Chester, on behalf of hundreds of my constituents who had signed a petition calling for meaningful consultation, only to receive a response from his successor after he was ousted from the job by his National Party colleagues. Since then, I have received correspondence from the Deputy Prime Minister, Michael McCormack, in response to my calling for real consultation for our community. His response was fundamentally to simply declare that the ARTC was tasked with the delivery of the federal government's inland rail project.

This week I unexpectedly received a letter from the Deputy Prime Minister regarding the inland rail project outlining all the 'great' work the coalition government has done for the electorate of Algerster—a letter dated 10 April, the day before the federal election was called. How convenient. How convenient, indeed. The people of Algerster deserve better, and federal Labor recognises that.

Last week, there was an important announcement for our community. A federal Labor government, a Shorten government, would appoint an eminent Australian to conduct an independent, transparent inquiry into the integrity and efficacy of the route selection process and financing arrangements associated with the delivery of the inland rail project. The inquiry would take public submissions and hold public meetings in affected communities and would report no later than the end of 2019. I welcome this announcement. I know that many people in the Algerster electorate will be pleased to hear of this commitment. Inland rail is an important issue for the Algerster electorate and it is about time our community was taken seriously.