



Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR MILLER

Record of Proceedings, 16 October 2019

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Road Infrastructure

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.10 am): I am pleased to follow the Premier's statement made in the House earlier today about the start of duplication works on the Capricorn Highway from Rockhampton to Gracemere. There is a great roads construction boom happening in Rockhampton right now because our government, which is strongly supported by the member for Rockhampton, is committed to creating a pipeline of investment and Central Queensland jobs. Construction businesses have opened new offices in Rockhampton because they know that there is plenty of road work around.

One of those businesses told the Rockhampton *Bulletin* last month that Central Queensland was enjoying a purple patch of infrastructure investment. Those businesses are moving to Rockhampton because they know that there is more work coming in the next few years with the Rockhampton Ring Road project and upgrades on the Rockhampton-Yeppoon road after strong representations from our member for Keppel.

Central Queensland is not alone in enjoying this boom. Projects with combined values of almost \$1 billion are driving a construction jobs boom in Cairns and Far North Queensland. Contracts are signed for a major Bruce Highway upgrade between Gordonvale and Edmonton that will start early next year—something, Mr Speaker, that I know you are very supportive of and interested in. The contract to design and build the jointly funded \$481 million project was recently awarded to John Holland Seymour Whyte AECOM Group, otherwise known as the HSA Group. The HSA Group will oversee the duplication of a 10½ kilometre stretch of the Bruce Highway and the relocation of a 4.7 kilometre section of the North Coast rail line. Importantly, this project will support more than 460 Far North Queensland construction jobs.

It joins two other major road upgrades currently underway in the Cairns region, including the \$152 million Smithfield bypass, which the member for Barron River advocated very strongly for, and the \$104 million Bruce Highway upgrade through Cairns's southern suburbs, which is strongly supported by the member for Cairns. The \$127 million Cairns Shipping Development Project is also a major employer. Massive half a billion dollar regional road projects like the Haughton River flood plain upgrade on the Bruce Highway south of Townsville and stage 1 of the Mackay Ring Road—the largest infrastructure project in that region's history—are doing the heavy lifting in our North Queensland economy as well as improving road safety.

The Palaszczuk Labor government is committed to investing \$23 billion in Queensland roads and transport infrastructure over the next four years—our fourth record roads and transport infrastructure commitment over five budgets. More than \$14.5 billion of that commitment will fund regional projects to drive economic growth and create more than 13,500 jobs. We will ensure that investment continues to give regional communities confidence and economic certainty well into the next decade.