




Speech By
Samuel O'Connor

MEMBER FOR BONNEY

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ADJOURNMENT

Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, Legacy; Gold Coast Youth Foyer

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (6.12 pm): Tonight I am going to talk about a few empty blocks of land—blocks that should be driving jobs growth for my part of the Gold Coast and helping people in my community. Instead, these are just patches of dirt. The only thing they are producing is dust. We have heard about how it is one year on from the Commonwealth Games, and today I had a look through the GC2018 post games report. It talks about the Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precinct—how it will provide 26,000 jobs for our area. The fine print says it has a 10- to 15-year delivery time frame. This is overpromising and underdelivering. We need this much sooner.

The report talks about Trade 2018, with 3,200 international delegates from tens of countries and about how the precinct was pitched to them. There is only one building confirmed for the nine hectares of state land in the precinct—only one. Clearly, they needed a better sales pitch. Which country could it possibly have come from? We had delegations from 26 countries during the games. Could it have been Canada or India or Singapore? Well, it is from Griffith University—not from the other side of the world but from the other side of the road. I have a degree in biomedical science so I know how difficult the job market is. We certainly do not want to have to see biomed graduates get elected to parliament just to get employed.

On a smaller scale, it is a similar story with the Gold Coast Youth Foyer in Southport. This is a fantastic project that will provide 40 rooms for young people doing it tough. The whole idea is about helping these 16- to 25-year-olds get their lives back on track. It was funded in last year's budget and announced in August, with construction due to start in the next few months. At the time I could not even get an answer out of the minister's office about the address. It turns out no-one else could either. There was no community consultation, not even with the school next door, and that is pretty extraordinary because they would likely have to take on some of these students. It has now been delayed by 18 months until the end of this year, and that is just for construction to start.

Youth homelessness is a huge issue on the Gold Coast. Just a couple of weeks ago I was on the barbecue for Coombabah State High School's Movies Under the Stars event. A young woman came over to have a chat with me. She was living out of her car, a little Suzuki Swift. Every night she would drive from car park to car park, finding the darkest and least conspicuous place to pull up before curling up on her back seat. I took her a bag full of sausages, bread and popcorn from the stall and the \$20 I had in my wallet. She was scared and frightened and desperately wanted to get out of the situation she was in. The youth foyer offers a chance for this, and young people like her cannot afford to wait.

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Order!

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members, I am standing.

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members, I am now standing for a second time. May I remind you about the rules about the debate going through the chair.

Mr O'CONNOR: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find the member's comments personally offensive and I ask him to withdraw.

Mr DICK: Which comments? It was 10 minutes ago. I apologise to the honourable member.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: And you withdraw?

Mr DICK: I apologise to the member and withdraw unreservedly.