



Speech By  
**Steve Minnikin**

**MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH**

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**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**

**APPROPRIATION BILL**

**Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)**

**Appropriation Bill**

**Transport and Public Works Committee, Report**

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (11.57 am): There is no doubt that the people of Queensland were hoping the Labor government would offer considerably more for transport infrastructure than is contained in the 2019-20 state budget. It is not just the LNP members who are raising concerns about the shortcomings associated with the budget. A major Infrastructure Australia report recently determined that infrastructure in Brisbane has failed to keep pace with the rapid population growth. In fact, the 2019 infrastructure audit says that even with the scheduled investment, which the government is spruiking, Brisbane's transport networks are forecast to become even more congested and with demand rising roughly in line with the forecast 30 per cent population increase. Despite the transport minister's claims to the contrary, Labor is not only struggling to catch up; it is in fact falling further behind.

Unsurprisingly, the report also points to the Beenleigh to city stretch of the Pacific Motorway as a further example of ongoing delays which are forecast to jump from 27 minutes in 2016 to 53 minutes in 2031. With a mere pittance in the budget for planning a second M1, under Labor there is no solution to South-East Queensland's traffic chaos on the horizon. Make no mistake: motorists will be forced to bear the costs for Labor's ineptitude, and not just through the above-inflation rises in registration costs, which the RACQ has labelled as unfair, with year-after-year rises under this high-taxing Labor government.

Labor is not doing nearly enough to address the major problem of congestion, which is costing the region in excess of \$2 billion annually in lost productivity. Furthermore, in relation to maintenance on the state controlled road network, it is disappointing that the estimated value of the backlog is well short of TMR's own guidelines for maintaining the existing assets. The Auditor-General has revealed in its report No. 4 for 2017-18 titled *Integrated transport planning* that the renewal of the existing network has been and continues to be underfunded. As at 30 June 2017, this figure was calculated at roughly \$4 billion and just a year or so later it has risen to \$5.312 billion. It is estimated that this renewal gap will increase to more than \$9 billion over the next decade. This chronic underfunding has serious consequences for road safety, productivity and our quality of life. It also has severe implications for employment opportunities for Queensland's regional and rural communities.

Even where money has been invested in roadworks, in the estimates hearings we heard how the bitumen approaches to bridges and passing lanes have been failing in major stretches along the Warrego Highway less than a year after the wide centre-line treatment went down. I am sure Queenslanders are expecting much better results for their taxpayer dollars.

At this point, the biggest infrastructure project for Queensland, the \$5.4 billion Cross River Rail project, raises more questions than answers. The departmental executives were unable to respond to questions about the final determination for the location of the stations owing to commercial-in-confidence provisions. The minister could not answer questions, even though he was given temporary carriage of this project whilst the Deputy Premier was overseas. It is acknowledged that the Cross River Rail project does not exist in isolation. There are also other related pieces of infrastructure, such as the inner northern busway, station upgrades, stabling yards and the like. However, at this point it remains unclear what impact the extra train services will have on waiting times at level crossings and when, or even if, those level crossings will be upgraded.

Under Labor, level crossing removal in South-East Queensland has completely stalled. The last level crossings removed in South-East Queensland were the crossings at Telegraph Road, Bald Hills and Robinson Road, Geebung back in 2014. The Labor government needs to involve all three levels of government in a coordinated approach to delivering these essential level crossing upgrades. The Brisbane City Council has committed \$40 million towards the level crossing at Boundary Road, Coopers Plains. The federal government has previously indicated that it will allocate \$73 million. Surely, it is time for state Labor to step up with the balance to finally get this project moving.

The shortcomings contained within the budget allocations for Transport and Main Roads are to be expected from a minister whose behaviour the CCC described as foolish, a minister who, during the estimates committee hearing, seemed more intent on looking backwards at past administrations and trying to rewrite history. If the minister were serious about learning from the past, he would take on board the impact of how the massive deficits created under the Beattie-Bligh Labor governments has put Queensland's transport future at risk.