




Speech By
Jason Costigan

MEMBER FOR WHITSUNDAY

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Bruce Highway, Tourism

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—NQF) (2.50 pm): There has been a lot of discussion across the chamber regarding rebooting tourism in the great state of Queensland in the aftermath of COVID-19. Today, I want to put forward a proposal to help reboot tourism in the Sunshine State, particularly in our regional communities—remembering, of course, how important tourism is to those communities, including my own community of the Whitsundays, where one in three people have a job thanks to the tourism industry. Today before Her Majesty's Queensland parliament on the eve of the 250th anniversary of Captain Cook's landing in Queensland for the first time, which in fact is this Sunday, I propose that we rebrand the Bruce Highway the 'Captain Cook Highway'. I want to see the Bruce Highway fixed, and there is no doubt that we need billions of dollars to do that.

As the leader of North Queensland First, I look forward to articulating my policies to get those projects happening following the next state election. From a rebranding point of view, I want to see the Bruce Highway renamed. Many people, even in politics, do not know who Bruce was but they certainly know who Captain Cook was. Captain Cook's name is known throughout the world. There is no doubt that a lot of people want to see tourism rebooted in Queensland. In the Whitsundays we remember the stroke of marketing genius when West Molle Island was rebranded many moons ago whereby today it is known as Daydream Island.

I want to also ensure that we are respectful to the traditional owners. I want to see sections of the renamed Captain Cook Highway—and extending on of course to Port Douglas from Cairns—to remember our traditional owners and to pay respects to those traditional owners up and down the Queensland coast, including the traditional owners in our part of the world—the Wiri people, the Gia people, Ngaro people and so forth. I think that does a lot symbolically in bringing our First Nation people together with non-Indigenous Queenslanders and non-Indigenous Australians. James Cook's historic and epic travels are part of folklore. In my part of the world, I am proud to say that some of those landmarks are still well known to this day and understandably so—places like Cape Gloucester, Cape Hillsborough, Repulse Bay, Pentecost Island and of course Whitsunday Passage, for without Cook we would have no 'Whitsundays'.

In conclusion, today I spoke to representatives of Mackay Tourism and Tourism Whitsundays, Michele Shea from Mackay Tourism and Natasha Miller from Tourism Whitsundays. Needless to say, there is no pushback from them. It is a great idea, a great rebranding exercise and it should happen 250 years on from Cook's landing.