




Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR MILLER

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Budget, Public Transport

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (9.53 am): Since 2015 the Palaszczuk Labor government has backed commuters with record investments in public transport. As this week's budget further confirmed, our government is pursuing a job-creating public transport strategy. It is a strategy of building more infrastructure and investing in services to better connect Queenslanders with trains, buses, ferries, trams and planes.

Labor has championed every stage of Gold Coast Light Rail. We built stage 2 for the Commonwealth Games which supported 760 new jobs, with the new stage to Burleigh under construction early next year—and we are planning the future stage to the Gold Coast Airport. We are partnering with the City of Gold Coast to plan for a better east-west public transport connection to Carrara Stadium. On the Sunshine Coast, work starts early next year on the \$550 million Sunshine Coast rail duplication, which will add track capacity, cut travel times and support 333 Sunshine Coast jobs. We are partnering with the Sunshine Coast Council and Mayor Mark Jamieson on a business case looking at mass transit options, including light rail to connect Maroochydore to Kawana.

Queensland Rail now runs more than 8,400 weekly rail services, the most in its 155-year history. I am pleased to inform the House that 105 temporary weekly train services added to the network in August to support social distancing will remain permanently on the timetable for commuters. We are continuing to trial and develop smart ticketing technology for commuters across Queensland as well. Smart ticketing is a \$371 million investment by the Palaszczuk Labor government. For the first time in this state, every Queensland commuter will have access to the same system and a choice of multiple options on how they pay to travel, whether they live in Coolangatta or in Cairns.

No project exemplifies the Palaszczuk Labor government's commitment to public transport more than the Cross River Rail project. Cross River Rail will transform how we travel in South-East Queensland. We are building the first full underground line with four new stations to connect key parts of our city in new ways, unlocking the bottleneck at the heart of the system, slashing travel times and growing capacity to allow future extensions to the South-East Queensland rail network. The Albert Street station will be the first new CBD station in more than 120 years, right in the heart of the CBD.

We know that the road to Queensland's economic recovery stretches long ahead. A dollar saved holds greater value in times of uncertainty and difficulty. Today I am pleased to inform the House that the Palaszczuk Labor government will freeze public transport fare prices in 2021. With patronage still down due to COVID-19, now is not the time to discourage commuters from returning to public transport. Our Fairer Fares policy, introduced in 2016, has saved Queensland commuters more than \$241 million through cheaper tickets and concessions. A freeze on ticket prices means that we will keep putting commuters first by encouraging people to continue to catch public transport.