




Speech By
David Crisafulli

MEMBER FOR BROADWATER

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ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (5.27 pm): I will begin by conveying my heartfelt congratulations to His Excellency not only for his contribution in the neighbouring chamber but also for his contribution to Queensland. He has been a fine Governor. To see the way that he has made people feel special and connected in that role is a great tribute to him and his wife, Kaye. We will dearly miss him, as will those small communities in our great state. He was never afraid to roll up his sleeves, so I pay tribute to him. I particularly did want to speak today because I did want to give this speech whilst he is still in office.

I welcome the new Governor. I had the chance to congratulate Dr Young just a couple of hours ago in person as we prepare for her swearing in. I wish her all the best in her upcoming role and thank her for her many years of service.

I congratulate the Speaker on being returned to that high role. Mr Deputy Speaker, I wish both of you all the best in what is an important role in this parliament.

I want to thank my colleagues for the great honour of being elected Leader of the Opposition. I particularly want to thank the two parliamentarians beside me, both the deputy leader David Janetzki, one of parliament's most decent and intelligent operators, and the Manager of Opposition Business, the formidable Jarrod Bleijie. Jarrod, thank you for the fire that you bring to this place and your true spirit of the contest.

As this is also a reflection on the last term, it is wonderful that the member for Nanango is in the chamber so that I can commend her for the way she conducted herself in this role. She is a formidable parliamentarian. She is an extremely decent human being. Above all, I was honoured to serve in her shadow ministry. In fact, part of my shadow ministerial responsibilities in tourism only came about because of the opportunity the member for Nanango gave me. It was in that role I realised just how important tourism is for this state and how important it is that we develop new product, that we find a way to use our natural environment in a respectful way and that we develop new opportunities for the next wave. As part of the Olympic Games, we have a 20-year window to get this right—a 10-year window to build up, that spotlight when it is on there in the middle, and the 10 years after. I thank the member for Nanango for broadening my understanding of how important tourism is.

I also thank the members for Surfers Paradise and Clayfield. They are also former leaders who are willing to serve in the shadow cabinet and serve in such a strong way. I also thank the former deputy leader, who is a very competent minister and a very competent shadow minister, and someone who once refereed—2005 was not your greatest day. I thank you, Tim, for your energy during the campaign and for the way you are performing in this parliament.

It is my electorate that I want to focus my contribution on today because without an electorate no-one in this place gets the chance to do anything for the state. Those who wish to serve on front benches on both sides do not get the opportunity unless they have an electorate. I want to talk a bit about my electorate and the mixture of offerings that are there. I will talk a bit about some of the sporting, schooling and hospitality opportunities there.

I think of Paradise Point as an amazing village. I will continue to advocate for my electorate office to be domiciled there. At the moment it is right on the edge of my electorate and I will continue to agitate to the Clerk for that to be the home of the electorate office because it is geographically magnificently centred. It is a place where those who do not have access to their own transport can get to. It is a wonderful little village.

Coombabah and Biggera Waters are two great suburbs with a mixture of housing offerings and two wonderful state schools, which I will comment on shortly. Hollywell has a dynamic marina which provides job opportunities, relaxing opportunities and dining opportunities. It is a wonderful precinct. Runaway Bay is a suburb where the largest employer is, which is the shopping centre. Both Hope Island and Helensvale have some magnificent estates. I am proud to represent those people.

I only have three schools in my electorate. I will start with the Biggera Waters State School because the principal, Val Faulks, will finish this year after 42 years in education and 12 years at that school. She has done a mighty job. The sense of pride that she has generated in that school has been amazing. The kids who go there are proud to go to that school, as are the children of Coombabah State School. Murray Gleadhill has turned that school around in a short time in attendance and academic achievement. I am very proud to sponsor an attendance award at the school. Under Murray's stewardship, he has driven a culture of kids wanting to go to school and it is heartening to see those improvements. They have a bush tucker garden. They are proud to pitch in. I am proud to represent them.

Finally, I mention St Francis, whose principal, Kathy Fuller, is currently on secondment. To Paul Rees, who is acting in the role, thanks for always welcoming me to the school. Father Marty, who is our leader in the church and our priest who we value and respect, has joined us from the Sunshine Coast. I was very lucky to be blessed by Father Marty before the election. Father Marty informs me that he has done that on many occasions across the state and he has never had an aspiring politician he has blessed not win an election. So I booked him in for 93 locations, although that is going to take a little while. I want to thank him for the energy that he brings to church services there.

I mention the sporting clubs in my electorate—cricket, football, netball, baseball. Today I want to talk about the soccer club, the Runaway Bay Bayhawks, because at the moment there is a young lady who is doing it really tough—young Ava Azzopardi. Not so long ago, she ran onto the field as a substitute as a perfectly healthy young girl and collapsed. I want to thank everybody at the club and I want to thank our health professionals for the care they have given her. She was in a very bad way and I want to thank Al Mucci from the club who has been keeping us updated. She looks to be on the improve, and we did not think we were going to be that fortunate for some time.

I turn to the investment that is going on in our area. There is a brand new shopping complex at Hope Island which was a vacant block of land for a long time and is now home to a first-class offering, including a Woolworths. It has been a great development for the area. The Runaway Bay Centre is currently undergoing a massive renovation and face lift. Unfortunately, tonight is its grand opening, so I have recorded a video message to wish them all the best from this chamber. They are a wonderful place in the electorate.

I turn to the new restaurant offerings that are popping up. I mention my mate Jack from Mecca Bah. We have institutions like loesco with Max Alfieri who has always given us the opportunity to go to a wonderful establishment. I am very proud of the quality of restaurants and hospitality in my area.

Before I get on to reflecting on those who assisted me in the election, I want to talk about the loss of a local legend in recent times—Tommy Raudonikis. Tommy was an icon in Paradise Point. Everybody remembers the sight of Tommy and Artie Beetson, two giants on the football field from different states who were the best of mates. To lose Artie many years ago and now to lose Tommy has left a big hole in the area. I thank his wife, Trish, for her friendship and I let her know that she is in our thoughts as we embrace the years ahead.

I turn to those who assisted in my election, and I will start with my family. I made a promise to my kids on my second journey in politics that I would not put them through the rough and tumble of politics, so I will ensure that my contribution will be short and sharp and I will not embarrass them. I do love my girls very much and I thank them for being wonderful young women I am very proud of. To my wife, Tegan, who does an amazing job looking after those children in my absence in many cases, I want to thank you for everything you have done for those kids.

On the election campaign, I want to thank John Clarke, Sam Domani and Gary, my branch chairs in the area. They do a heck of a lot of work to me. Pat and Brett, who were magnificent in that election campaign, were both juggling their own work and were prepared to do so many hours. I am so grateful for your friendship and hard work. I thank Alex, Prue, Fran and many others.

To my staff, in particular to Gen, who is doing an amazing job in an electorate office that increasingly is getting a massive workload of people who are calling about other issues; I want to thank her for what she does in keeping our local area connected. Newsletters are going out next week and I can tell honourable members that, without her, that show would not have gotten on the road, so thank you.

To Lisa, I am most grateful to have you in the office. To Prue and Kirsten who have made wonderful contributions, I am thankful to you. The young member of parliament, Zoe Platt, is someone who came to us and we found she was an engaged young woman. We have been delighted to engage her. For example, she is covering the Remembrance Day service for me on Runaway Bay. I am most grateful to her and to young Brandon, who has done some work experience. I am keen to nurture the future young talent in our area for people who want to make a contribution to service clubs, sporting clubs et cetera.

I want to talk about the priorities for my electorate. I have to start on the Broadwater and I have to once again say that I lament the fact that the things that matter the most to the people I represent are not being addressed in the Broadwater. Let me go again and place on record that people want to see a more regular dredging schedule in the Broadwater. People live there because they love the lifestyle, they want to have good boating facilities and they want a good lifestyle that involves connecting those people who live on the water and those people who do not live on the water. We want boat ramps for people who do not live on the water and we want access from people's patios who do. They want the depth of the canal to facilitate that. I am not sure why there is an aversion to conducting the scale of dredging that people want to see. It can be done in an environmentally sensible way, but it is vital for the lifestyle.

I would love to see the waterways authority and the government act on the houseboats in the area, many of which are unseaworthy and many of which do not collect their effluent, which is an environmental issue and an aesthetics issue. They would not cop it in Sydney and I do not cop it on the Broadwater. It should be to the Gold Coast what the harbour is to Sydney. To look out and see disregarded houseboats is wrong.

I want to acknowledge the member for Bonney, who I know has a very active interest in the area. His constituents would be telling him a similar story. I want to see a better balance in enforcing speeds, and I have welcomed the opportunity to work with the waterways authority on that. I also place on record my thanks to Hal Morris, who is departing after many years in the role of CEO. He has always been incredibly decent to deal with.

I again talk about the duplication of the bridges over Jabiru Island. In an area where there is development on both sides and there is a corridor in place it makes no sense to me why that should not be on the forward works list of projects at the very least. Every day we see the traffic increase a little bit more. It is such an important connection to be at the mercy of only two lanes; it desperately needs an upgrade.

The schools also need an upgrade. I mentioned previously how proud I am to represent those great state schools in my electorate, but the facilities there just do not cut the mustard. I particularly talk about the demountables at Biggera Waters. There is a need for upgrades and there is a need for a new classroom at Coombabah as well. The member for Bonney has the state high school in his electorate, and many of the students in that school come from the Broadwater electorate. Again, they were buildings that came on the back of a truck many decades ago. I would like to think that a schedule to upgrade them should be first and foremost on the list.

I turn now to the Runaway Bay police station, and law and order is a big issue on the coast. Whilst it is only a small station of 24, it is vital that that be properly resourced. I again place on record my strong desire to see the suburb of Hope Island included in the Runaway Bay police district. I will continue to advocate for that. At the moment it falls in Coomera, and the Coomera district is exploding; it is under immense pressure. I would like to see the suburb of Hope Island as well as the resources attached to it domiciled at Runaway Bay. It makes immense sense for that to occur.

At present the train station that will be built on Hope Island Road is grossly under-resourced in terms of the car parking schedule. We will advocate, as will the member for Theodore, for an adequate amount of car parking, otherwise people will simply not use it. We see it at our neighbouring stations. Commuters drive there and go around in circles looking for a park. It just does not make sense. If you are building something like that, put in adequate parking. There is an opportunity there. There is more than enough land for car parking, which was proven during the games. There is more than enough opportunity for car parking. Get on with it and please build it.

It is a similar situation with the M1; the building of the Coomera Connector is vital. However, to already have a \$600 million cost blowout before a sod is turned is absolutely ridiculous. I know that hundreds of millions of dollars might not mean something to the government, but it means a lot to me

and I will tell honourable members why. The \$600 million blowout could build that bridge crossing over Jabiru Island many, many times. In fact, you could build a bridge, you could fix the schools, you could dredge the Broadwater and you could still have enough money to get on and do other projects as well.

I am increasingly frustrated that the government is unable to build things on time and on budget. We saw it with the next stage of the light rail when \$700 million became a billion dollars and now we are seeing it with this: \$1.5 billion becomes \$2.1 billion. When that sort of culture is allowed to permeate in the end you are unable to build infrastructure because it will never stack up on a benefit-cost ratio, so you will never be funded by other levels of government and you will not have the capacity to build the things that need to be built. I am deeply concerned about that.

I finish my contribution by talking about the state. I do not want 2022 to define us by disease, as has 2021. I choose hope over fear. I believe that you can be safe and you can still be compassionate. To all of my constituents who are stuck on the other side of the border who want to come home and home quarantine safely, I say that we will continue to fight for you and all of Queensland. In a post-COVID era Queensland will do very, very well. We have everything that is needed and more. We have agriculture, we have tourism, we have mining, we have a south-east corner that is attractive where people want to live and we have the regions that are proud, strong and diverse. We will fight for them every day of the week.