




Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR MILLER

Record of Proceedings, 13 May 2021

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Cross River Rail

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.07 am): It is the year of tunnelling for Queensland's largest infrastructure project, Cross River Rail. It is powering ahead and those tunnels are arcing down through the hard Brisbane tuff rock. We have more than 2,400 workers busy across 12 active worksites creating Brisbane's new underground. Elsie, the first tunnel-boring machine, has now done more than one kilometre of tunnelling underground from Woolloongabba and is working her way underneath the Brisbane River to Albert Street. Merle, tunnel-boring machine No. 2, has dug around 600 metres and is following close behind Elsie. They are the 'dynamic duo'! The project team has made fantastic progress on the excavation of new stations underground at Albert Street, Boggo Road and Roma Street. These highly skilled men and women are working 24 hours a day to get the job done and have already notched up more than seven million work hours.

Cross River Rail is supporting Queensland's economic recovery plan right now. When it opens in 2025 it will transform how we travel. Isn't that a wonderful thing! Isn't that fantastic! It is awesome! Cross River Rail will also be critical to support the Gabba as the main stadium for the 2032 Olympics should Queensland's bid be successful. The Palaszczuk Labor government has always backed Cross River Rail as a priority for Queensland, unlike those opposite. It is a project that will be 100 per cent paid for by this Palaszczuk Labor government to the great shame of those down in comfortable Canberra.

Successive LNP federal governments led by Tony Abbott, Malcolm Turnbull and now Scott Morrison have all stubbornly refused to contribute to Cross River Rail. In this week's budget, we saw billions of dollars of federal money splashed on road projects in New South Wales and South Australia. Meanwhile, only \$800 million—a measly \$800 million—of the \$1.6 billion in federal funding for Queensland is projected to be spent over the next four years in our Sunshine State. That is despite the federal budget papers revealing Scott Morrison has kept \$3.8 billion in his back pocket in unannounced funding to buy the election either later this year or next year.

Some of that \$3.8 billion could be released right now for the Sunshine Coast Stadium, it could be released for the Bundaberg flood levee or it could be released for Bruce Highway upgrades or the inland freight route. But, no, they have kept it secret as a secret election slush fund. It is unacceptable that billions of dollars can sit unallocated on the federal government's balance sheet while communities in the fastest-growing state miss out yet again. It is unacceptable for Queenslanders to be told by the federal government that they must wait at least two elections to see most of the funding—two elections!

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members.

Mr BAILEY: If Scott Morrison truly wants to know how good Queensland is and how good we can be, he should stop taking this great state for granted—

Mr SPEAKER: Apologies, Minister. I am having difficulty hearing the minister. The interjections on both sides will cease.

Mr BAILEY: If the Prime Minister truly wants to know how good Queensland is and how good we can be, he should stop taking this great state for granted and stump up a fair share of infrastructure funding for our state.