



Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR MILLER

Record of Proceedings, 15 September 2021

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Regional Queensland, Road and Transport Infrastructure

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.06 am): Queensland is a big state. It is home to big opportunities, the Big Pineapple, the Big Gumboot, the Big Mango, the Big Cane Toad—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BAILEY: Exactly right. Hear, hear! Mr Speaker, I do not think I have ever had such endorsement from the opposition in six years here. Thank you for that.

Mr SPEAKER: Yes, members. We all want to support the tropical fruit industry!

Mr BAILEY: Queensland has the biggest road network in the nation. The Palaszczuk Labor government looks after more than 33,000 kilometres of roads from Coolangatta to Cape York. It is a big job, but one we are delivering through a record Transport and Roads Investment Program. That investment supports 24,000 Queensland jobs—most of them in regional communities.

The member for Maryborough, the Assistant Minister for Regional Roads, knows Queensland incredibly well and he has been out on the roads. From Barcaldine to Blackall and Eidsvold to Emerald, the Assistant Minister for Regional Roads has been out there talking to the community and seeing our record investment in regional roads firsthand being delivered by hardworking Queenslanders.

In Blackall he met Ozzie, who said she has never seen so much work in the local area. Ozzie is extremely grateful for our \$5 million sealing project of the Blackall-Jericho Road as she uses it to travel between regional towns. This road is important not only to Ozzie but also to the Blackall saleyards, and it is an important connection between Blackall, Emerald and Longreach.

The assistant minister also stopped in at Longreach, meeting dozens of council workers like George and Billy. Because the Palaszczuk Labor government is investing in regional roads, the Longreach Regional Council now has 17 graders on the ground improving western roads when it usually has three. Because of this investment George and Billy said to our assistant minister that they wake up each day confident that they have enough work to keep them going until retirement.

The assistant minister also met Longreach Mayor Tony Rayner, as I did recently as well, who said many locals could not believe that the Muttaborra-Cramsie Road is finally being sealed. The Palaszczuk Labor government is fully funding and delivering the \$5 million third stage of this project, and you can go and see the Muttaborrasaurus as your reward.

Despite having the largest road network in the country we were short-changed by the federal Morrison government in the recent federal budget. Compared to Queensland's \$1.6 billion, Victoria and New South Wales got \$3 billion each and South Australia, a smaller state, got \$3.2 billion. Over the next four years we are delivering \$17.5 billion for regional road and transport projects, supporting more than 15,000 jobs and driving our economic recovery in the regions. It is a big job across a big state, but the Palaszczuk Labor government and our assistant minister are cracking on with it and delivering for regional Queensland with our record road infrastructure program which is—big!