




Speech By
Mark Robinson

MEMBER FOR OODGEROO

Record of Proceedings, 16 June 2021

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (4.01 pm): I also add my condolences to the family of the member for Stretton, Duncan Pegg. He was a very popular member of parliament and I enjoyed working alongside Duncan, especially in our co-chair roles of Parliamentary Friends of Tennis in Queensland. He will be missed.

I rise to deliver my address-in-reply speech in the 57th Queensland parliament. I acknowledge His Excellency the Governor, Paul de Jersey, for his address at the opening ceremony. I also acknowledge Queen Elizabeth and also congratulate the member for Mulgrave on his reappointment as Speaker. I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land both here at the parliament and also in my electorate, the Quandamooka people, and pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging in both locations.

It is certainly an honour to be re-elected for a fifth term by the good people of the Cleveland district, the electorate of Oodgeroo as it is now called, including North Stradbroke Island. I am proud of the solid local result that we achieved and especially under particular circumstances: the global COVID pandemic that favoured a return of the current government; a strong local Labor campaign with a good local Labor candidate; a strong Independent Alliance campaign; extreme coverage by left-leaning media including the ABC, the *Guardian*, *Redland City Bulletin* and others that wrote me off early in the piece; and the preferencing arrangement where the LNP was placed last or near last on most voting slips. So our strong result was against this backdrop and it was particularly rewarding. It is an emphatic vote of support from the community for LNP values, key infrastructure projects and services that I enunciated in the campaign.

The result was even more satisfying on North Stradbroke Island where the government's mismanagement of the economic transition post sandmining to tourism has created mass job losses, economic and social chaos and Indigenous division and disadvantage. While our result was strong at 60 per cent two-party preferred at Dunwich, Labor's primary vote was a record low 13 per cent across the whole of island—North Stradbroke Island, Minjerribah—and six per cent at Point Lookout. Labor's vote collapse confirms the government's 'Trad-broke Island' plan is a sunken wreck in the bay, having been rejected by the community, and that is people from all backgrounds, all walks of life—workers, small businesses, conservationists and the majority of the Quandamooka people, among others. If the Palaszczuk government is not hearing that, it is tone deaf. So it is time the government started listening, and I implore it to start listening to locals and to provide a better, balanced and inclusive approach for all of North Stradbroke Island's residents. Clearly the Palaszczuk government must recognise that it has no mandate to continue in the same way that it has.

I want to thank my campaign team and volunteers for their hard work and dedication during the election campaign and for their work over the entire parliamentary term. Much thanks to Chris, Robin, Mike, Julie, Trish, Vicki, Henry, Kate and many others whom I could name. I also want to thank my staff—Sue, Josh and Lyle—who worked tirelessly in the 56th Parliament. I especially thank Julie, my

amazing wife of 35 years, and our wonderful family and their partners for standing with me and supporting me. A special thanks also to my mother-in-law, Clare, who recently turned 90 years of age. I thank her for her constant encouragement and her prayers.

I acknowledge the hard work of the LNP candidates in the Redlands coast region—Henry Pike, Bev Walters and Kirrily Bolton. External factors impacted the results this time, but I encourage them to run again. Government MPs will not be so lucky in 2024 under what will be a decade-long tired and on-the-nose Labor government by then—like the asset-selling Bligh Labor government in 2012—and they will not have the COVID crisis to save them next time. I want to be on record thanking the member for Broadwater, David Crisafulli, for his involvement in my electorate and in the campaign and for his visits as the then shadow minister for tourism and environment that he made to my electorate in the previous term. I also want to congratulate him on his elevation as the LNP leader, so thank you, David, for visiting Redlands coast with your shadow cabinet. In February of this year the Redlands was the first region outside of the Brisbane City Council region visited, and that just shows your commitment to our region.

This very left Labor government is failing us. It is failing to manage the economy—and I will have more to say on that in my speech during debate on the budget—it is losing control of health and it is failing to balance everyday life issues. In short, it is sending us broke and woke. Queenslanders are carrying the Palaszczuk government's failures on the economy like a ball and chain around our ankles. On its watch, Queensland has among the worst unemployment, lowest business confidence, highest debt levels and highest bankruptcy in our nation. This is nothing new for very left, woke Labor governments in Queensland. They went broke in a mining boom before the global financial crisis, they lost Queensland's treasured AAA credit rating and they sold \$15 billion of assets in the asset sale of the century—and, by the way, they spent it all without paying down debt. Debt was ballooning out of control toward \$100 billion before COVID hit us.

Labor governments have damaged Queensland's tourism industry, including on North Stradbroke Island, with their flick-it-on-and-off approach to borders that has killed off tourism operators and jobs. It was the Premier, not the LNP, who opened the borders then closed the borders, opened them and closed them, harming the state's tourism industry on each occasion. Tourism is not a tap. You just cannot turn it on and off and expect things to thrive. Business and tourism need predictability, not the added uncertainty created by this government's indecision. Now it blames the Morrison government for its own flip-flopping but then goes cap in hand to Canberra to the same government and begs Scott Morrison to bail it out and save the tourism industry that this Labor government has brought to its knees.

Labor is taking our borrowings to record levels but not building the job-creating infrastructure that Redlands coast and bayside Brisbane needs. Sadly, infrastructure investment in the Redlands Coast is far less than it should be. I will talk more about that in my budget reply speech. We welcome that the government has finally committed to some projects after years of pressure. I will speak in more detail on specific infrastructure and services in my budget reply speech.

For now I continue to call on the government to fast-track a number of projects. Firstly, the Redland Hospital upgrade, including an ICU, beds and car parking, something I have fought for for several years. Then there is the Cleveland satellite hospital, which apparently is not in Cleveland. It was labelled as in Cleveland in the 2020 budget papers, but now it is labelled as in the Redlands in the 2021 budget papers—go figure! In relation to Redlands roads, we need more than the Cleveland-Redland Bay Road duplication, which appears to be the only state road with a major financial commitment in the current budget, but if you read the detail it is not full duplication. It seems to exclude the Thornlands section in the Redlands. I will have more to say on that in my budget reply speech.

There are marine structure issues, such as with the Harold Walker Jetty and the Wellington Point breakwater. This is important infrastructure. Another issue is the fire station that was promised by the member for Springwood. Media are reporting that it has been reallocated outside of the Redlands. I would ask the member for Springwood to clarify through the budget process that Redlands is going to get its fire station. I will do all I can to press the government to honour its promises so that these projects are delivered and delivered on time by 2024 or sooner—not just planned, designed and reannounced at the next election as Labor did with the five eastern transitway bus lanes promised in 2017 but zero built and completed by 2020. Again these promises seem to be there this term.

I have mentioned the Wellington Point breakwater project. Other services I am fighting for include the Wellington Point High School hall upgrade; facilities for other schools; more police resources for community safety; artificial reefs for sustainable fishing—firstly at Wellington Point. I note the concern by many in the fishing industry about the Spanish mackerel fishery. It is very important that the

government listens constructively to the fishers and we get that right. I am also fighting for koala protection measures; water quality of the run-off into Southern Moreton Bay; turtle, dugong and other marine research; better targeted funding to North Stradbroke Island—for example, the Dunwich harbour redevelopment. We need the master plan to come out soon and to genuinely engage the community.

I will also fight bad government decisions like the funding cuts to independent public schools such as Cleveland District State High School and Ormiston State School which will be impacted by it. Despite my objections to the minister, two demountables at Ormiston State School, which the STEM programs for girls and boys were running in, were removed meaning that the program has to be truncated. So much for a commitment to STEM programs for girls.

I will fight overdevelopment at the pristine Point Lookout headland on North Stradbroke Island. There are many locals in Point Lookout who are very angry at the way the government has acted in a roughshod manner, evidenced by the low vote for Labor. Many of the Quandamooka people are very angry about how they have been treated. The Leslie Harrison Dam is half the dam it was, meaning it has half the water supply. Because the gates were not put back on we now have half the water supply, half the drought protection if you like, than we used to have. After the Save the Jetty campaign, I am glad that eventually the minister reversed the mean decision to demolish the Harold Walker Jetty and has promised to replace it, though it needs to be in the same scale and capacity. We look forward to that happening.

Small and medium sized enterprises and tourism operators are doing it tough in the Redlands, as they are in many parts of Queensland. I acknowledge Rebecca Young and the Redlands City Chamber of Commerce team for championing Redlands businesses and the good work that they do, and Colin Battersby and the North Stradbroke Island Chamber of Commerce team, among them a number of good Quandamooka leaders and businesses such as Uncle Norm Enoch and Mark Jones and others, who are doing a good job leading North Stradbroke Island's recovery. We will keep backing all of these businesses of all types, shapes and sizes and fight for the North Stradbroke Island Chamber of Commerce to have its seat on the strategic planning committee returned and the funding cuts that it experienced reversed. Cutting the chamber's funding was purely political. I call again on the government to reverse its funding cuts to the chamber so businesses can get back on their feet and create new jobs and grow the tourism economy on Stradbroke. The government can improve the economic transition by working with the chamber and business community instead of against it.

In terms of transport and roads infrastructure, major state arterial roads are heavily congested due to 30 years of underfunding by Labor governments. Labor has promised to duplicate roads many times at many elections, like duplicating Mount Cotton Road and upgrading intersections. I have heard it many times. While we pushed the government to upgrade the Gateway Motorway on ramp at Old Cleveland Road and dragged them into finally duplicating Cleveland-Redland Bay Road, there are still hundreds of millions of dollars needed to catch up on state roads.

In terms of rail, the duplication of the Cleveland line from Manly to Cleveland is critical and should be brought forward to be built concurrently with Cross River Rail, not long after as is the current pace under this government. In fact, the promised time savings from Cross River Rail for commuters on the Cleveland line, apparently 14 minutes according to the member for Capalaba, are impossible without the duplication of the rail, according to transport authorities like Robert Dow from Rail Back on Track and others. I look forward to the member for Capalaba re-issuing the election promise he made that it will be a 14-minute time saving. We will hold him accountable to that election promise.

With the likelihood of the Brisbane Olympics in 2032, I again call on the government to stop excluding the eastern busway and Cleveland line rail duplication and to announce these critical projects for the sake of the constituents of Brisbane and Redlands so that Redlands can provide venues and not be left out of the Olympics as we fear will be the case under this government.

The current health crisis facing Queensland's health system is due to the state government losing control of Queensland Health. Its recent approximately \$500 million-plus cuts to the hospital and health services is causing even greater harm and suffering to Queenslanders. As I have mentioned, the government needs to fast track the building of the promised ICU and beds at Redland Hospital. I am glad that community pressure and pressure from the LNP has finally made Labor make some sort of commitment to action. In relation to the car park at the hospital, after many years of pressure there finally looks to be some action. For many years we have been trying to get the government to commit to that. In fact, the pressure came from investment from the federal government towards these projects.

Sadly this government is always playing catch up at Redland Hospital. We will always lag behind under this government until it treats the health of Redlanders seriously and equal to other parts of Greater Brisbane. Another obvious indicator that Labor is losing control of the health system is its lack

of investment in palliative care at Redland Hospital and elsewhere. This long-term Labor government is losing control of palliative care and we see that as part of the broader picture of losing control of other aspects of health across the state.

In contrast to the government's failure to deliver health service outcomes at Redland Hospital, the LNP government achieved much in just one term.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Gerber): Order! Members, cease your interjections.

Dr ROBINSON: We almost completely eliminated—

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have just called the House to order. I will start issuing warnings.

Dr ROBINSON: We almost completely eliminated ambulance ramping. We eliminated the dental waiting list, Labor's waiting list, with over 10,000 people on it. We started a hospital based palliative care program at Redland Hospital with new beds plus extra in-home services. By now there should have been a full 10-bed palliative care unit, but there is not. We reduced Labor's elective surgery waiting list and their waiting list for the waiting list. The Redlands needs an LNP government to replace this long-term Labor government that has lost its way.

Ms Boyd interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Pine Rivers, you will cease your interjections. That is the last warning.

Dr ROBINSON: In conclusion, I look forward to continuing to work hard for the families of the Cleveland district, the Oodgeroo electorate and North Stradbroke Island—Minjerribah—for this term of parliament to deliver our fair share of infrastructure and services. I close by thanking the community for their trust and support, and I thank God for his grace towards me.