



Speech By  
**Patrick Weir**


**MEMBER FOR CONDAMINE**

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Record of Proceedings, 12 May 2021

**MOTION**

**Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance**

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (5.44 pm): I rise to support the housing motion brought into the House by the member for Maroochydore, Fiona Simpson. There is a chronic shortage of land and housing to support the growing population in many parts of Queensland, including social housing. This shortage has not occurred overnight and it is not a new phenomenon in Queensland. The Palaszczuk government has a track record of inadequate investment in infrastructure in this state—despite what we have just heard—and that has been happening for over six years. The Palaszczuk government's legacy will be a failure to deliver.

This government are even failing dismally to reach their own targets for new social housing, although they continue to blame the federal government for that blunder and everything else from the performance of the Broncos to the Deputy Premier's stutter. In 2019-20 in Queensland the social housing spend was at \$132 per head, down from \$135 in 2018-19. That was the second lowest spend across any Australian state or territory and still they blame the Prime Minister for their housing woes. They should take some responsibility for once rather than blaming all and sundry. This issue lies firmly in their court. The Labor government had no plan whatsoever, even before the COVID pandemic hit, to address the large increase in relocations from interstate to Queensland, which has been happening for over five years and not just the past 12 months.

The Condamine electorate lies within the Toowoomba Regional Council boundary. That area has been experiencing a high demand for land and houses to purchase, a rental crisis and a significant social housing shortage. The pressure on housing and land has been evident for over five years, with analysts in the property market sector highlighting it time and time again. In the 12 months ending September 2020 in Toowoomba there was a 29 per cent decline in lot approvals. Currently, a stock of 3,200 residential lots is on hand but of those only 858 have approval for operational works. In reality, that means the area has two years worth of supply.

Available suitable land does exist in the Condamine electorate. However, the infrastructure and planning department of the Toowoomba Regional Council has not had the foresight to look at the future housing needs of the region. The solution lies in investigating the Toowoomba regional priority infrastructure area zones and making amendments where needed to ensure suitable areas of land are available for development to meet the housing shortage. Recently developers in the region met with the Toowoomba Regional Council to put forward their proposals for the development of suitable land, but there are two stumbling blocks. One is that if the land is not in a priority infrastructure area zone developers will be charged exorbitant fees in headwork charges, into the millions of dollars, which is obviously a huge deterrent. Secondly, some of the land in the priority infrastructure area zones is not suitable for housing. Even a mountain goat would struggle to survive on it.

Queenslanders deserve a lot better from our state government. Their lack of investment, poor planning and lack of foresight has caused a massive decrease in the approval of new dwellings. Since 2015 across the state residential dwelling approvals have decreased by close to 40 per cent. We would

like to see this Palaszczuk government start prioritising new infrastructure investment to provide an assurance that the housing supply will be solid into the future and that rental properties will be affordable. In the Toowoomba Regional Council area a number of huge projects are in the wings and ready to go, including the inland rail project and the medical cannabis facility. Those projects promise over 1,000 jobs but we have nowhere to house the workers. That problem affects not just Toowoomba.

Along with about 15 of my colleagues, I was in Rockhampton last week where we saw some of the major infrastructure that the federal government is building, such as its big spend at the Shoalwater Bay—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr WEIR:** Over and over again we heard that there is nowhere to house the workers for all of the projects that the federal government is delivering in Rockhampton. In all my meetings in Rockhampton I did not hear the local state member get a mention. We have heard from the member for Glass House about the south-east regional plan, which needs to be overhauled as a matter of priority.