




Speech By
Sandy Bolton

MEMBER FOR NOOSA

Record of Proceedings, 10 March 2021

ADJOURNMENT

Noosa Country Drive

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (7.20 pm): System failure: that is what is being experienced in my electorate right now as we sit in this chamber. As we debate legislation that may mean nothing at the grassroots, argue over the time allocated for bills and ask questions that we could find the answer to through a phone call, my community, which I consider my extended family, is in unacceptable danger.

Members know why. From an inappropriate volume of heavy haulage vehicles on a road that was never built to accommodate them. This narrow state road winds through beautiful historical villages filled with families who work in the wellness, organic produce, tourism and nature industries. Horseback adventuring, homestays and homeopaths all operate to provide unique experiences along a tourism route called the Noosa Country Drive.

Ten years ago an independent road assessment deemed this route could not accommodate a projected increase to 40 to 80 truck movements per day, and yet for the last nine months there have been up to 250. This route is disintegrating under the onslaught, with the mental, physical and economic wellbeing of these communities now at a critical stage and leading to 2,386 signatories desperate to get a resolution. It should not take a petition.

How have we come to this? It is because of an inadequate quarry management plan and an underpinning environmental authority that is not worth the paper it is written on. The greatest failure may be a state one, with no policy or mechanism to review these EAs that are no longer fit for purpose. Visualise this: buses filled with our schoolchildren confronted daily with huge rock loaded trucks of over 40 tonnes that swing out into their path on blind bends. Just imagine what that is like as there is nowhere to go. Residents are trapped in their homes as they are too fearful to take the journey to town, businesses are closing as visitors leave and people's mental health is deteriorating.

Over the last year my electorate has had an increase of 30 per cent in domestic violence. We must ask ourselves whether this situation is contributing. That no department, minister, agency or even the Premier can identify a way to alleviate this danger leaves me speechless. If one builds a granny flat, a traffic management plan and contributions are essential. However, an increase of such magnitude not requiring a route assessment nor a road levy to maintain the roads can only lead to one conclusion: a failure of major magnitude, and one that must be immediately corrected to stop it happening in Noosa and in other communities across Queensland.

Responsibility, accountability and consequences—we have seen the consequences of this failure. Who is responsible and accountable for this? Every single one of us who sit in this chamber. We as legislators are responsible. I am asking for members' help right now to see an end to this failing in our communities. That is our job.

