



Speech By
Ann Leahy

MEMBER FOR WARREGO

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT

Regional Queensland, Road Infrastructure

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (2.26 pm): People across south-west Queensland have suffered as a result of the neglect of the Palaszczuk Labor government and recent natural disasters. Roads have been under water; bridges, culverts and approaches have been washed out and pavements are saturated. Local governments have had their resources stretched by emergency repairs trying to get the bridges and roads open. Sadly, these roads had suffered from the Palaszczuk Labor government's neglect prior to the onset of the wet season. The estimated deferred maintenance backlog for the Darling Downs and south-west region as at 30 June 2021 had risen to \$1.3 billion. The Darling Downs and south-west have the biggest backlog of deferred maintenance of any region in the state.

This Palaszczuk Labor government has sat on its hands when it comes to addressing the backlog in this region. Not only does the region have the highest backlog but also has some of the highest number of road deaths. The RACQ rated the state's worst electorates for road deaths, and those electorates are in the Darling Downs and south-west region. Callide, Southern Downs, Condamine and Warrego all rated in the top 10 for road fatalities. The electorate of Callide tops the list. I know that the LNP candidate, Bryson Head, drives on those roads. He has been fighting for better roads in Callide. I look forward to joining him in our fight for better regional roads.

There is a pattern here: a lack of road investment and a high number of road fatalities. In contrast to the neglect of the Palaszczuk Labor government, there were good commitments from the former coalition to roads in the region, such as the \$8 million for the Warri Gate Road in the Bulloo Shire. That was a particularly hard fought for commitment. The state Labor government ignored the council's requests. There was: \$24 million for the Bollon Road and other strategic bitumen extensions in the Maranoa; a \$230,000 upgrade to the Mitchell-Bollon Road in the Balonne Shire; and a \$3 million allocation for the Cracow Road upgrade in Banana Shire in the Callide electorate. I call on the federal Labor government to honour these commitments, as it will be diabolical for people. More people will die. Councils will find it very difficult if these commitments are not honoured. I will continue to fight, and I know that Bryson Head, the LNP candidate for Callide, will also fight for better road funding for the regions. The road toll clearly demonstrates that this should be a higher priority for both state and federal Labor governments.