




Speech By
Brent Mickelberg

MEMBER FOR BUDERIM

Record of Proceedings, 30 March 2022

MOTION

Sunshine Coast, Rail Infrastructure

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (5.18 pm): I wonder who gave the minister his riding orders today. He has gone with option A: playing politics and going slow on the Beerburrum to Nambour rail line—\$550 million going slow, \$10½ million underspend this year, a reduction of \$32 million next year. Is it little wonder that the federal government has no confidence in the state government to deliver what is a state responsibility in rail? It is time for Labor to get on board the Sunshine Coast rail. It is time for Labor to get on board with funding heavy rail from Beerwah to Maroochydore—something that in 2009 it promised would be built and opened by 2020. We are still waiting. Despite Labor's hollow promises, time and time again the Sunshine Coast is still waiting for the state government to invest in the roads and the rail that we need to support the massive population growth experienced across the Sunshine Coast in recent years.

Despite being one of the fastest growing regions in Queensland, residents on the Sunshine Coast must deal with a substandard single-lane motorway and no rail. It is simply not good enough. The state government are happy to trumpet the benefits of population growth across the Sunshine Coast, but when it comes to investing in infrastructure like roads and rail they go missing. When was the last time the member for Caloundra or the member for Nicklin stood up and publicly called on the state government to deliver on Labor's promise to build rail through to Caloundra and on to Maroochydore? Never! Along with my LNP state colleagues, I have been fighting to get the roads and the rail we need from the moment I walked into this parliament, as have my colleagues all across the coast for years. In my maiden speech I spoke of the opportunity and the challenges that population growth on the coast represented. I said we need 'investment in rail and roads so that residents have a viable option to get to and from Brisbane in a timely manner'.

Infrastructure Australia's analysis of the North Coast Connect business case states that 'growing travel demand is expected to place significant pressure on the existing transport network'. The minister likes to say they rejected it, but they rejected it because the state government would not get on board.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr MICKELBERG: Infrastructure Australia stated that they 'recognise the need for additional investment in this part of the Queensland rail network'. In the business case evaluation they said, 'our review found the project aligns with government policies to support regional connectivity, reduce urban congestion, and improve sustainability by providing an attractive alternative to private vehicle trips'. The Minister for Transport and Main Roads says a lot, but in November he said that rail between Beerwah and Maroochydore was 'absolutely viable' and he said that the 2032 Games were 'a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to get transport infrastructure like this for the coast'. Why will the state government not get on board?

Despite these sentiments the Treasurer has thumbed his nose at the federal government's commitment of \$1.6 billion to get on with the job of building rail from Beerwah to Maroochydore. The Minister for Transport and Main Roads is playing politics rather than getting on board, getting on with the job and matching the federal government's commitment.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Miller!

Mr MICKELBERG: If the state government does not get on board then Sunshine Coast locals will know that the state government has gone completely off the rails. If they do not know it already, locals in my electorate and right across the Sunshine Coast will see how this Labor state government simply ignores the needs of the Sunshine Coast. Sunshine Coast locals will know that Labor seat warmers like the member for Caloundra and the member for Nicklin are nothing more than mouthpieces for the government. I know that the former and next member for Nicklin, Marty Hunt, is on board for better rail for the Sunshine Coast, but where is the current member for Nicklin? He is missing in action. He might have moved in, but he is still missing in action. He is nothing more than a mouthpiece for the state government, and Sunshine Coast residents know it. It is the end of the line for this arrogant, lazy state government.

If Labor are serious about the Sunshine Coast they will get on board and match the federal government's commitment. The facts are that heavy rail from Beerwah to Maroochydore stacks up. The existing line does not even service communities like Nambour, let alone population centres east of the highway. We need this rail line now, not in 10 years, not in 12 years. We need the state government to get on board, stop playing politics and get shovels in the ground so that Sunshine Coast residents get the transport infrastructure that they deserve.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister for Transport and Main Roads, I have cautioned you a couple of times with no apparent reaction. You are warned under the standing orders.