



Speech By
Bruce Saunders

MEMBER FOR MARYBOROUGH

Record of Proceedings, 26 October 2022

MOTION

Rockhampton Ring Road

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (5.16 pm): I am a bit confused. I thought we were talking about the Rocky ring-road but now we are talking about water. You can see why the people of Queensland are confused about the opposition. We started talking about a ring-road and the next minute I am swimming in a dam. I do not where I am. I rise to support the amended motion moved by the minister. Let us all calm down. I am going to have to take my suit coat off as it is a bit wet from being in the dam. We are talking about roads. We are talking about the Rockhampton Ring Road. We know that the cost of living is going through the roof and who caused it. It was the Morrison LNP government. How many hats did the former disgraced prime minister have? He wore five or six hats but he could not see this inflation coming!

We heard the member for Chatsworth talk about the blowouts in projects. I will talk to him about the blowouts in New South Wales. Let us have a look at that. The Metro City and Southwest rail line has blown out by \$6 billion. I will repeat that because their hearing has gone a bit: \$6 billion. The cost of the M6 motorway project has increased by \$400 million. That is what we are talking about. We are talking about costs. The Rocky ring-road has blown out by about \$700 million. Not only have the costs blown out; we have labour shortages but, of course, they do not worry about that. They want slave camps. They want people working for a dollar an hour. They will bring people here to work for a bowl of rice and a bloody bed overnight—I withdraw. That is what they will do. We have a labour shortage. This project has been deferred, which is sensible by the Albanese government. Let us look at some of the projects in Central Queensland.

We know that there is a shortage of workers. We know that there is a supply chain problem. This project has been deferred. I have travelled to Rockhampton and Yeppoon to meet with the members for Keppel and Rockhampton. There are no two stronger advocates in this House for their communities. They are very strong advocates. I have walked on the Rockhampton to Yeppoon road with the member for Keppel. We have looked at the intersections and at the upgrades needed on that road. The member for Keppel drives that road every day. I have been with the member for Rockhampton to Lawrie Street and out to Parkhurst to look at all the upgrades on the Bruce Highway. This is a man who has fought so hard for his community since being elected. I am proud to be on this side of the House with two local members who have worked very hard for their communities and put their communities first at all times. They make representations all the time to me and the minister about road projects.

Can members imagine what would have happened if members opposite—and I have been ignoring them because, as is the case for the rest of Queensland, they are irrelevant—with all of their cutting, sacking and selling had stayed in power? With the rain events, can members imagine what would have happened? We would not have any workers to—

Mr Harper interjected.

Mr SAUNDERS: I take that interjection from the member for Thuringowa. They have not delivered. They did not deliver anything when they were in power—zero. All they did was cut, sack and sell.

With the rain events we have had around Queensland, I have travelled a lot of roads, particularly in Central Queensland, with the hardworking members for Keppel and Rockhampton. With the staff the LNP sacked from TMR, we could not get roads fixed because there would not be any staff. We would be relying on contractors who could not get staff. We are lucky that this government has delivered in spades for regional Queensland. Perhaps members opposite should get their leader out of Brisbane and go and talk to people in regional Queensland about the record spend this government is delivering in regional Queensland.

Mr NICHOLLS: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I clearly heard the member for Maryborough in his contribution refer to people being prepared to come here and work for a bowl of rice. I ask whether you rule that that type of language with its implications and imputations is unparliamentary language?

Mr SAUNDERS: I withdraw, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before I take advice in relation to that matter, there was another use of unparliamentary language which the member attempted to withdraw but used the wrong language. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr SAUNDERS: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I note your second withdrawal. On the first matter, yes, that was unparliamentary.

Mr SAUNDERS: I withdraw.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Before I call the next speaker, I point out that during the member for Southern Downs's contribution we did not have a copy of the motion. If we had had a copy of the motion, we would have ruled that the member's speech was not relevant to the motion. I will provide general guidance to all members that the motion is specifically about road and transport infrastructure and that the amendment is also around the same thing. It is not a general infrastructure debate; it is about road and transport infrastructure.