



Speech By
Christopher Whiting

MEMBER FOR BANCROFT

Record of Proceedings, 30 March 2022

MOTION

Sunshine Coast, Rail Infrastructure


 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (6.04 pm): I also rise to speak in favour of the amended motion moved by the minister. I take up a couple of issues that have come from across the chamber. The member for Kawana has said, 'The money is there. It is on a platter. It is there for us.' I would like to remind the LNP what has been offered before. I remind members of the example that the member for Caloundra gave.

Exhibit A: at the last federal election Scott Morrison promised the people of Geelong a fast rail link to Melbourne and made a \$2 billion funding commitment for a \$4 billion project. Lo and behold, it was worth up to \$15 billion—\$15 billion. That is a bit of a difference there. As mentioned, it is now three years later and nothing has happened—not a shovel in the ground, not a sod turned—absolutely nothing. Why would you rely on what Scott Morrison has said? You just cannot trust that man.

I do feel sorry for the member for Maroochydore. She has been in government twice and nothing has happened with this project before. That must be very frustrating. She says, 'It is time to deliver the project.' It has been time twice before. Nothing has happened. She also said that we want to punish the people of the Sunshine Coast. We would not want to do that. They have suffered enough under the LNP members for years and years.

This LNP motion is emblematic of the slow decline of the LNP in this House. They could have chosen to move a motion about health issues: 'No. We don't want to talk about that.' They could have moved a motion about the federal budget: 'No. We better not talk about that either.' They could have moved a motion about the lack of federal transport infrastructure funding. We could have talked about Cross River Rail. The question for the member for Chatsworth, as we have heard before, is: where is the LNP on this? We funded this project. It is one of the most important projects in Australia. We have seen nothing from the federal government for this infrastructure project.

This motion is merely about the strange figures they have come up with for one project. Do you remember the old LNP? When we came here in 2015, there was Lawrence Springborg, Jeff Seeney and Andrew Cripps. They were substantial. They were a bit intimidating for us new members coming through. They would not have wasted their time or effort on such an unsubstantial motion as this.

Today the LNP has descended into low-impact irrelevancy under the member for Kawana, and that is a shame as well. This motion reminds me to congratulate the new leadership team of the LNP. I think it is a balanced team. It represents both wings of the LNP—the Sunshine Coast and the Gold Coast. I am afraid to say that all other parts of the LNP have become isolated rumps. The country members are stuck down the back. They are more like a non-Katter remnant. It must be galling for them to see how the KAP members are doing a better job at being country members than they could ever be.

This motion is about the \$1.6 billion rail line, or thought bubble that we have heard today, from Beerwah to Caloundra. The truth is that that money would not even build a line from Beerwah to the highway. The truth is that it looks like they have plucked this figure out of the air. We have already heard that the member for Fisher has said that it is based on costings for the 'Murrarie' rail extension. We have established that we think he meant the Kuraby to Beenleigh rail duplication. We did the planning and business case for that to put the dollars on the table. That project is very different. I will pull up the member for Ninderry on this.

That project is an 18-kilometre duplication and is on an already established rail corridor, costing \$2.6 billion. The Beerwah to Maroochydore project is 40 kilometres of new rail line through residential areas and farm land, and it has a number of different drainage issues it has to cope with. It is very different. We are committed to the corridor on the Sunshine Coast. Well done to the members for Nicklin and Caloundra for helping to deliver \$3 billion worth of infrastructure investment. They are doing a great job. That is in real contrast to the enfeebled LNP and their limpid motion here tonight.

(Time expired)