




Speech By
Hon. Glenn Butcher

MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE

Record of Proceedings, 26 October 2022

MOTION

Rockhampton Ring Road

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (5.52 pm): I rise tonight to speak to the amended motion by the minister. I will stand here every day of the week that I am in parliament and support the member for Keppel and the member for Rockhampton because they are the true champions of Central Queensland. Along with me, they are supporting Central Queensland, the real Central Queensland, delivering for our electorates.

I want to have a little bit of a chat about some of the matters we have heard here tonight. One of the speakers went on for five minutes about absolutely nothing to do with the Rockhampton Ring Road and got away it. I will touch on it just a little. The project the member for Southern Downs talked about is the Emu Swamp Dam. The LNP want to have a go at the Labor Party about projects that have been delayed or have cost blowouts. Let's have a talk about the Emu Swamp Dam. Let's see where that project is right now. That project is on a hold. That has been done by the proponents of Emu Swamp Dam, not the Queensland government.

Let's have another look at the project and tell a little bit of a story here to the members who are sitting here today. When this project first started, it was announced by the proponents through the detailed business case draft that that project would cost \$84 million to complete. Guess what the latest figures are? It is heading north of \$240 million for the same project. That proposal is now that deep in by the local proponent who had the detailed business case done by the local Chamber of Commerce and now it is heading way north of \$240 million.

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock! Member for Southern Downs, you are warned.

Mr BUTCHER: They have a hide coming in here and spending five minutes of their time not talking about a great project for Rockhampton and the ring-road that is going around Rockhampton, but coming in here and talking about projects that they know they had blowouts when they were in government and it continues to blow out as we talk.

The member for Keppel and the member for Rockhampton are always advocating for their electorates to ministers in our cabinet. To let you know of a few, the member for Keppel can be proud of the work she does in her electorate. Some \$14.3 million was committed to a 42-bed detox centre in her electorate for rehabilitation in Rockhampton and her community, and it was all because of her advocacy. As we have heard tonight, there has been an \$80 million road upgrade to the Rockhampton-Yeppoon Road. We know in Central Queensland how important that upgrade was for the safety of road users because there have been many deaths on that road. It is only because of the member for Keppel's advocacy that that road was delivered.

The member for Rockhampton has been relentless in chasing the Rookwood Weir project moving forward for the benefit of the Rockhampton electorate into the future. He has been instrumental in getting the proposals coming forward for the new water. Then we move onto the second piece of great advocacy work he has done in water—the Mount Morgan pipeline. It is not even in his electorate and he is still supporting it from his electorate of Gracemere to get water to his neighbours up in Mount Morgan. I was there on the day we made the announcement with the mayor of Rockhampton, Tony Williams, and he said that the pipeline that the Queensland Labor government has delivered is a game changer for communities in regional Queensland. That is the work that these two members are doing for their communities in Central Queensland.

Turning to last night's budget, the Labor government is committing \$2.1 billion to new roads and transport infrastructure investment in Queensland. \$866 million of that is in roads along the Bruce Highway—\$400 million for the Inland Freight Route that I know all the National Party members over there just love, and \$400 million for the beef corridors to support the Rockhampton beef industry that we know is so strong, as well as the Kuranda Range road upgrade. If you want to talk about road projects, there are some bloody good ones that are being supported by this minister, and this is great news for the whole of Queensland.

How things have changed after Queensland has been duded by the former LNP federal government that never backed Queensland and never had the support from the LNP here in Queensland. It is certainly great now to have a federal Labor government that is not only listening to our ministers here and supporting our ministers in the work they are doing but also communicating and talking to our local members, like the member for Keppel and the member for Rockhampton, to make sure that we make Central Queensland one of the best places on earth and the best place here in Queensland.