




Speech By
Laura Gerber

MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

Record of Proceedings, 1 December 2022

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT

Tallebudgera Connection Road, Koalas

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (2.30 pm): Earlier this year I stood in this chamber and I warned this House of a dangerous stretch of Tallebudgera Connection Road that locals have taken to calling the 'devil's elbow'. It took crash after crash and a massive community campaign for the minister to even acknowledge this dangerous road. While we wait for this state government to take the action that it has promised to make this road safer, there has been yet another tragedy. Hernando Half Penny was a much loved member of our community. He was a valley local. He brought a smile to the faces of those who drove past his home on Tallebudgera Connection Road and he played a vital role in conservation efforts not just in our valley but right across Australia. Tragically, on 7 November 2022 Hernando's life was horrifically taken when he was run over while crossing Tallebudgera Connection Road.

The road is not well lit, it is prone to hooning and speeding and Hernando lost his precious life because of this road. So much more could have been done by this state government to have protected Hernando. However, I am not talking about a human life and I have intentionally framed my contribution this way not to trivialise the human cost of this road but because, to quote Wildcare representative and advocate Joanne Brierley, 'They always focus on the human aspect and they think if no humans get hurt they don't need to do anything.' Hernando was a Currumbin Wildlife Hospital research koala and I want to see this state government take action to fix this dangerous road not just for the human lives at risk but for Hernando. Hernando was one of 30 healthy research koalas vaccinated against chlamydia and released back into the wild. He is the 98th recorded koala death along Tallebudgera Connection Road since 2010.

Mr Stevens interjected.

Mrs GERBER: I take that interjection. Last week I joined the community on Tallebudgera Connection Road to discuss solutions. Our community wants to see this state government immediately implement measures along Tallebudgera Connection Road to keep them safe and our koalas safe. The wildlife flashing awareness monitors have been broken for months, but this state government has refused to fix them, saying there is no money in the budget. The whole road needs better lighting which would make it safer for road users as well as our koalas. The government should also consider some fencing along key areas to funnel the koalas—which are going to cross there regardless because koalas like living on the fringes—into safer areas to cross. This state government could be doing so much more not just to protect our community on Tallebudgera Connection Road but to protect our koalas, which are endangered. How many more lives need to be lost on Tallebudgera Connection Road at 'devil's elbow' before this state government takes action?