




Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR MILLER

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Gold Coast Light Rail

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (9.54 am): I also acknowledge Bruce and Denise Morcombe for their great contributions and acknowledge the Day for Daniel. I also acknowledge that it is World Teachers' Day and acknowledge in particular two transformational teachers for me in the state school system, Carolyn Lingard and Graham Iffland.

The Palaszczuk Labor government is going for gold on transport. This morning we are opening another round of community consultation for a future stage of the Gold Coast Light Rail. For the first time Gold Coast locals will see what light rail would look like from Tugun to Coolangatta, including through the growing Gold Coast Airport. This morning the airport has come out and supported it, saying that stage 4 is key to the city's long-term connectivity. Stage 4 of light rail from Burleigh to Coolangatta will create a seamless light rail link from the Helensvale heavy rail station to the New South Wales border.

It is not just stage 4 reaching a milestone, on the weekend I was pleased to be on the Gold Coast in my old stomping ground of Broadbeach with Queensland senator Murray Watt and the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and member for Gaven to turn the sod on major construction for stage 3 of the light rail from Broadbeach to Burleigh. This project will extend light rail access right the way down eight stations to Burleigh, reduce congestion on Gold Coast roads with better public transport options and will support 760 jobs on the Gold Coast. We already know the incredible legacies left by previous state and federal Labor governments from stages 1 and 2. Stage 1, of course, commenced under the then federal and state visionary transport ministers, the now Premier and the Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese.

Now it is time for a new legacy. Not only has light rail transformed the Gold Coast; it also is loved by local residents. For the week ending 16 October I am pleased to report that patronage on the Gold Coast Light Rail was at 100 per cent of pre-pandemic levels—the first mode of public transport to do so. The Palaszczuk Labor government is delivering better public transport services because we want to see more people on it. Since elected we have made public transport more affordable by freezing fares and keeping fare adjustments at or below inflation to help out Queenslanders with the cost of living. We introduced the Fairer Fares initiative in 2016, providing off-peak discounts, concession discounts and the 'eight and half-price' deal.

Mr Hinchliffe: Hear, hear!

Mr BAILEY: I acknowledge the contribution of the member for Sandgate in achieving that. This has saved Queenslanders more than \$388 million at the hip pocket as they deal now with the inflation pressures left by the Morrison LNP government. We also made go card fares 30 per cent cheaper than paper tickets, and that will continue as we roll out smart ticketing, a system that New Zealand is now copying from Queensland. The Palaszczuk Labor government is also delivering up to 30 per cent

discounts on vehicle registration fees for seniors card and pension card holders and allowing Queenslanders to pay their rego monthly via direct debit in more manageable amounts—again helping them with the cost of living in practical ways. The more we help Queenslanders with the national cost-of-living pressures, the more we help our great Queensland lifestyle.