




Speech By
Ray Stevens

MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH

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ADJOURNMENT

Road Infrastructure

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (6.06 pm): Does anyone complain about the Ipswich tollway today? I certainly do not. I am happy to pay to use a road built by private enterprise to facilitate easy traffic flow out west of the Brisbane-Gold Coast corridor. The events of this week on the M1 make it absolutely clear that an alternative to the M1 from Brisbane to the Gold Coast must be embarked upon immediately. I have been crying out for this no-brainer piece of infrastructure since the M1 passed its use-by capacity years ago, and a four-hour delay on Tuesday caused by an 11-car pile-up and another heavy accident today make it abundantly clear that a solution to this dangerous embarrassment of a road needs to be addressed now.

The only way that I can see a broke state government and a financially stressed Albo federal government is for both parties to engage the private sector, like the light rail, and get a tollway underway today. The so-called Coomera Connector is but a bandaid fix for the 160,000 cars a day using the M1 and, by the time it is built, the car problem will have jumped to 200,000 cars per day. Accidents and gridlock will be of Los Angeles proportions. It is totally the fault of inaction by this Labor state government in hiding from the necessity to address a problem as obvious as the nose on your face.

The government boasts how wonderful it is having all these people move to South-East Queensland and enjoys the added income from stamp duty, GST and other taxes, yet it fails to address the singular economic and lifestyle inhibitor of South-East Queensland through its failure to address road traffic explosion.

The alternative M1 was on the original Albert Shire town plan, the first in Queensland, in 1974, but was later removed to appease rural interests. With South-East Queensland developing as an urban region and the state government insisting on huge numbers like 60,000 dwellings be incorporated into city plans, it is absolutely essential to provide adequate road infrastructure to cater for these massive increases in road users or risk losing the livability factor that attracts people to move here in the first place.

The 2032 Olympics will be a laughing-stock if we cannot move people from the Gold Coast to Brisbane in a timely manner, so it is even more important to get cracking on a solution right away. The political buck-passing that engulfed the Goss Labor government over the so-called 'koala highway' cannot be repeated for the current alternative M1 as our population has doubled since that argument held up an alternative route for years. For those who do not want to pay a toll, there is always the free current M1 if they are happy to take a little more time and accident risk while driving from the Gold Coast to Brisbane.