




Speech By
Robert Skelton

MEMBER FOR NICKLIN

Record of Proceedings, 30 March 2022

MOTION

Sunshine Coast, Rail Infrastructure

 **Mr SKELTON** (Nicklin—ALP) (5.34 pm): This is going to be fun. I rise to speak in favour of the motion as amended by the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. There is no denying that the population of the Sunshine Coast is booming and the region needs critical transport infrastructure to keep up. That is why I am proud to be part of a government that is spending a record amount on roads and transport throughout the state and especially through the north coast pocket. Of the \$27.5 billion being delivered over four years, nearly \$3 billion in road and transport projects are being delivered on the north coast. That includes the business case for a future rail link between Beerwah and Maroochydore, which is underway and jointly funded by the state and federal governments.

It is this business case that will inform decision-makers about how many and where stations might be. It is this business case that will inform how much a project of that magnitude could potentially cost. It is not Ted O'Brien who will decide, despite his Facebook promo video mapping out locations for stations. It is not Andrew Wallace who will decide how much funding is needed, despite him claiming in a press conference on Monday that we will not need a dollar more than \$3.2 billion to deliver the project in full.

Let us look at another project on the federal government's books. Eight years ago the Turnbull government committed \$10 billion towards inland rail. A year ago they updated that figure to \$16 billion. In this year's budget they have just added another \$3 billion to that project.

Unlike Ted O'Brien, Andrew Wallace, Scott Morrison and Barnaby Joyce, the Palaszczuk government likes to do things the right way. We plan. We do the business case. We make investment decisions and we deliver. For example, the Beerburrum to Nambour project is another jointly funded rail upgrade for the north coast. We did the business case alongside the federal government and covered what is needed to expand capacity on the existing rail line between Beerburrum and Nambour. For the benefit of the member for Broadwater, that is an example of how governments can work together. It is from that detailed work that we mapped out the staged delivery of upgrades and committed the funding needed to get it done. The last time we were in this House, the Premier stood up and announced that early works on that project are underway. Major constructions will begin this year. That is because we knew the costings and put up the funds for it. Now we are getting on and delivering it.

Mr McDonald: Why didn't you talk about it in your maiden speech?

Mr SKELTON: I take the interjection from the member for Lockyer. I did not mention it in my maiden speech. I did mention all the railway towns that will be bypassed by this thing, although it is a great thing for the Sunshine Coast. How about members opposite think about deeds, not words.

When stage 1 is completed we will have additional capacity on the line for extra services in the future and will see time savings on local roads. The Morrison government's announcement this week is nothing short of an election pipedream in the hopes of sandbagging safe seats on the Sunshine Coast. It is all spin and no substance. As the minister said today, Scott Morrison's 'SCAMCOS' announcement

does not stack up and neither does the opposition when it comes to fighting for Queensland's fair share. I also note that the only promise that those opposite have made to build a Sunshine Coast rail link was when the member for Caloundra put out his pre-election material and down the bottom of the page, marked with an asterisk and in fine print, it said 'pending funding'.

I will fight for my region and the broader region of the Sunshine Coast. I have a lot of electoral differences with people on the coast that affect my region. Another thing that has not been mentioned in this chamber is the Sunshine Coast Mass Transit strategy, which is up for review by members of the public. I do not think that we should be dictated to by anyone: the federal government, myself, those guys opposite. It is up to the people to decide—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Comments will come through the chair, please, member.

Mr SKELTON:—in partnership with all three levels of government. Then we can get the funding and get things done. It is like an episode of *The Simpsons*. I will explain a bit of transport infrastructure for you. Monorail: mono means one, rail means rail. That is exactly how your projects are: they do nothing, they deliver nothing, they are only an advertising trick.