



Speech By


Barry O'Rourke

MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Rockhampton Ring Road

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (2.39 pm): I take this opportunity to update the House on the Rockhampton Ring Road. This long-term visionary project will deliver a new 14.7-kilometre section of Bruce Highway west of Rockhampton, including a new bridge over the Fitzroy River, with key linkages into the city at Ridgелands Road, Alexandra Street and the intersection of the Bruce Highway with Rockhampton-Yeppoon Road.

Early works have commenced, with surveyors surveying the road corridor, and the fencing contractors are in place. Ergon is relocating power poles and just last week we saw Telstra service relocations underway. There are 16 structures that will be moved or demolished over the coming weeks, and tenders have been called for approximately \$280 million in road construction which will be awarded in the next couple of months, with major works commencing prior to Christmas this year. One tender will be for the Rockhampton-Yeppoon Road end of the corridor, and the other will be for Ridgелands Road and the Capricorn Highway. It has amazed me how the federal member for Capricornia, Michelle Landry, and Senator Matt Canavan have criticised Labor governments, both state and federal, when the coalition federal government had over 10 years to deliver the ring-road project.

I have been on the phones talking to a few hundred people regarding the ring-road, and they are pleased that it will be delivered over a slightly longer period with more local employment supporting more local businesses where possible. Originally it was proposed to set up a 500-person workers camp. Having a large fly-in fly-out workforce is of no benefit to the locals in Central Queensland. These contractors would spend their pay in their home towns, not locally in Rocky or on the Capricornia Coast. We have a couple of major projects nearing completion, like the \$360 million Rookwood Weir and the major works up at Shoalwater Bay, and they have a few hundred Rocky locals working on them. This will allow these workers the opportunity to apply for work on the Rockhampton Ring Road project.

We are getting on with delivering this outstanding jobs project, which will be an absolute game changer for my community of Rockhampton. Something like 2½ thousand trucks travel through Rockhampton each and every day and they have to go through some 19 sets of traffic lights. A new bridge over the Fitzroy will take the bulk of that traffic out of the town and make the commute much easier for everyone.