




Speech By
Fiona Simpson

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

Record of Proceedings, 30 November 2023

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Direct Sunshine Coast Rail Line

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (2.13 pm): I welcome news that the federal government will keep their commitment of \$1.6 billion in funding to the Direct Sunshine Coast Rail Line, otherwise known as CAMCOS, but the state still has not got on board with a deadline and a destination, and no commitment to taking it to Maroochydore, as they had originally promised to do. It is time the state government got on board and stopped playing petty, nasty politics and treating the people of the Sunshine Coast with no respect.

The previous LNP government allocated \$1.6 billion towards this project in their budget which was tabled in the federal parliament. The new federal government put an infrastructure freeze on and stripped out funding for the MRI, but they have committed to keeping the \$1.6 billion towards this project. I am calling on the state government to give a commitment to at least match and go further in ensuring that this project continues on to Maroochydore, that there is a deadline and there is a destination.

Maroochydore CBD is the centre of the Sunshine Coast and is also the nexus of the public transport system and services, and rail to Maroochydore is important not only for the Olympics but also for getting people off the roads and to their jobs and services. There will be at least 1,400 athletes housed in the athletes' village there and it will be very important as well to access other services during the Olympics. The state government has spent more time and money on hiding their reasons for not progressing this. There has been more business cases done on Maroochydore rail than there has been on the proposed knockdown and rebuild of the Gabba which has seen an extraordinary amount of money assigned to it without any evidence of a business case—certainly not one that has been released.

It is very important that there is a commitment to get rail to Maroochydore, to ensure that the services are met. This piece of infrastructure is necessary to get people off the roads and it will also take pressure off the Bruce Highway. While the Bruce Highway still needs upgrades, there will come a point where people will say they want to be able to get in the realm—they are saying it now. A survey I put to the Sunshine Coast community showed more than 80 per cent of people confirmed that rail to Maroochydore was their No. 1 priority. However, the state Labor government, that originally promised to do this by 2020, are still not committing. There must be a commitment and a deadline for rail to destination Maroochydore. It is time to get on board and to build it.