




Speech By
Jason Hunt

MEMBER FOR CALOUNDRA

Record of Proceedings, 16 November 2023

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Federal Labor Government, Infrastructure Funding

 **Mr HUNT** (Caloundra—ALP) (2.04 pm): It is a dark day when I have to compare a federal Labor government to a previous coalition government, yet here we are. The people on the Sunshine Coast are used to being let down by the LNP. It is almost routine now—have a whinge, have a whine, collect a petition, deliver nothing, rinse and repeat.

In their last term they could have delivered a second access to the Bruce Highway like the Bells Creek Arterial Road, but they refused. They could have done something—anything—about rail duplication or a direct passenger rail link, but they refused. They could have stretched to a single set of traffic lights for Ridgewood Road, but they refused. They might have made some sort of effort on the Bruce Highway, but they refused. Of course, we are yet to hear any details from the Sunshine Coast LNP about the \$15 million of funding for Nirimba State Primary School that was on the Leader of the Opposition's now infamous tweet that lasted about three minutes before it got taken down. For my federal colleagues to so completely underestimate the needs of the Sunshine Coast and fall into the same trap is absolutely infuriating. We want that funding. We need that funding. We deserve that funding.

Funding of \$160 million for the Mooloolah River Interchange—gone. That is not fair. The MRI is a critical enabling piece of infrastructure to unlock congestion throughout the Sunshine Coast, providing north-south connectivity between Maroochydore and the southern growth areas. It is essential to take the pressure off existing road corridors, and without it there can be no dedicated north-south Sunshine Coast public transport corridor for the LNP to oppose.

Funding of \$18 million for the Nicklin Way-Third Avenue connection—gone. This was a joint commitment—federal, state and Sunshine Coast council—which would increase access into and out of the Caloundra CBD and promote active transport. It is incredibly disappointing that the federal government is walking away from a project like this which previously enjoyed the support of all three levels of government. This transport corridor is particularly vital for the residents of Caloundra, and I will fight with every means at my disposal to make sure this project becomes a reality.

Mercifully, funding of \$1.6 billion for the direct Sunshine Coast line remains, but the funding is awaiting the detailed business case. This business case is of course the necessary next step and will take the project forward even further for site investigations, surveying, staging options et cetera. At least we have two tiers of government with skin in the game.

To the federal government I say: you must not cut the funding to the Sunshine Coast. It is not right. It is not fair. We will fight you for every single penny.