




Speech By
Jim McDonald

MEMBER FOR LOCKYER

Record of Proceedings, 15 March 2023

MOTION: GABBA REDEVELOPMENT

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (5.27 pm): It is an absolute privilege for me to rise and speak on behalf of the LNP government. We are proud that there is going to be an Olympics in Queensland. We are proud that there is going to be an LNP government when the Olympics are on. A good government should have good management. Good government should be delivering good project management. Good planning, good delivery, good leadership and good control is how we make sure that good projects get delivered on time and on budget.

It was a pleasure to be with my colleague the member for Burleigh on Monday when we asked the Auditor-General about cost overruns on Cross River Rail and the Gabba and discovered that the \$1 billion cost announced by the Premier was done by media release. We discovered that the \$2.7 billion blowout—that is \$1.7 billion extra—had no business case. This is not the first time that this has happened. This government has a track record. Wellcamp was not that long ago. It took us all the way through to estimates to discover the final cost of \$220 million, and it was without a business case.

The Queensland Audit Office report No. 16 of 2021-22 stated that this government wanted to deliver \$52.2 billion of infrastructure over four years. Guess what! Because of poor planning and poor coordination those projects are overrunning by 11 to 21 per cent.

We want to see a great Olympics in Queensland. We want to see legacy projects delivered but this government is not one to do it. This is a clear case of the difference between an LNP government and a Labor government.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I apologise, member for Lockyer. Members to my left, I am having difficulty hearing the member for Lockyer. I would hope that you will give him the courtesy of actually allowing me to hear his contribution.

Mr McDONALD: This is a clear example of the difference between an LNP government and a Labor government. We put the best people on a board to deliver projects and to make sure they are on time and on budget. This government puts themselves around the table with their mates to control things and then outsources the work to consultants at an additional cost. It is no wonder these things are going sky-high. As I said, they have form. The Auditor-General identified six projects in *Report 16: 2021-22—Contract management for new infrastructure*, and that report is further evidence that this government cannot project manage anything. This is \$1.7 billion and we discover now there are another 23 projects with a cost overrun of \$10 billion. That is \$5,000 per household. How many people in their community would like \$5,000 to spend on power or fuel? There are people coming to see me in my electorate who are struggling to put food on the table, let alone send their kids to swimming lessons or school camp.

This is a real issue. When you have \$10 billion in cost overruns, as the Treasurer said, that is about interest, it is about delays, but it is also about cutting services—something this government does not seem to care about. They are certainly not listening to Queenslanders. As those services get pushed

out, as the projects get delayed, we are missing out on things. A poorly serviced hospital in our community is worth \$2 billion. That is five hospitals. I know that in Toowoomba and the Darling Downs they would love to see that hospital go ahead. I will put on the record now that I bet it will be delayed because of this big black hole that is \$10 billion and growing.

The Auditor-General is a very fair person. He will say when there are good things and he will say when there are bad things, but Report No. 16: 2021-22, for those who want to read it, it actually says that poor management and poor controls have caused the overruns. In fact, it goes one step further and says that the framework for these projects was dated back to 1999 and has not been reviewed. It does not contain contemporary project management practices. This government is certainly out of control.

I support the motion by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. It is a smart thing for us to release business cases. This government was elected on accountability and integrity, but talk is cheap. I can tell those opposite that the people of Queensland are listening. The people of Queensland are watching. We want to see the legacy of the Olympics in South-East Queensland. We will be proud to see it delivered for the people of Queensland, not the Premier's baby.