




Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR MILLER

Record of Proceedings, 16 November 2023

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Bruce Highway Upgrade Program

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (10.18 am): The safety of Queenslanders on our roads is paramount. That is why we have our \$13 billion, 15-year program to deliver upgrades right across the length and breadth of the Bruce at 80-20. These projects improve reliability, flood resilience, deliver upgraded intersections, lane separations and add overtaking lanes to make driving safer and to save lives.

The Palaszczuk government has delivered 466 projects under the Bruce Highway Upgrade Program, with 80 currently in delivery, broken down to 31 in construction, 28 in design, 21 in planning—a pipeline. Some 120 of these projects have been completed since January 2019, including 110 construction projects and 10 in the planning and design phase. The Palaszczuk government commitment to safety is underpinned by our \$1.6 billion investment in road safety and our commitment to work with the federal government to develop a national road safety data collection and reporting framework.

The answer to the need to continue upgrading the Bruce Highway is obvious: do not cut funding. As advised yesterday, over the past decade there has been a 24½ per cent decrease in crashes on the Bruce Highway and a 26 per cent decrease in fatalities per vehicle kilometres travelled.

Mr O'Connor interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Bonney, you are warned under the standing orders.

Mr BAILEY: This can be attributed to ongoing programmed investment by this government.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, you are warned under the standing orders. Direct your comments through the chair. That goes for other members today.

Mr BAILEY: For the federal government—for any government or opposition—to consider cutting funding to the Bruce Highway is totally unacceptable. Queensland has the largest road network of any state. We are the most decentralised state in the nation, with more regional towns and cities than any other state in Australia. The Palaszczuk government has proven its ability to deliver a sustained rolling program of improvements along the Bruce Highway—466.

Investment in the Bruce Highway now saves money in the medium and the long term through improved flood resilience that allows freight to get through to regional communities during extreme weather events and through reducing the cost and impact of road crashes. There is no more important investment in this state. We know that our work to improve safety on the Bruce Highway has saved lives. We will fight every single day to ensure we get the funding our state needs to keep upgrading the Bruce Highway and to continue the upgrades that we have been delivering.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BAILEY: I will not hear it from those opposite, who neglected the Bruce Highway for the three years they were in power. They have announced billions of cuts in infrastructure. That is what they have said. Believe them. We will always fight for the Bruce Highway—not dump it, like the pretenders on the other side of the House.