




Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR MILLER

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Federal Labor Government, Infrastructure Funding

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (9.49 am): The Palaszczuk government remains very concerned about the federal government's infrastructure review and its impact on Queensland. A case study of that impact is our recently announced additional commitment to the Varsity Lakes to Tugun M1 upgrade. The Palaszczuk government announced funding in time to save the 300 jobs that depend on this project and to complete the project. The Palaszczuk government had sought federal government funding, on a 50-50 basis, of the \$500 million cost escalation due to the La Nina weather impacts, flooding, asbestos treatment and removal, inflation and PFAS issues. Instead, the Australian government has agreed to fund only \$70 million, leaving Queensland to step in to save the jobs and to get the project completed.

The Commonwealth proposes to break up much of Queensland's funding into road corridors. The Bruce Highway, for example, is broken up into three corridors, each with a cap on funding. When the federal government claims that its corridor packages 'give states flexibility', what it means is that it is refusing to provide additional funding to deal with nationwide cost pressures and is forcing states to choose which projects to drop.

The Deputy Premier is leading a 'Team Queensland' delegation to Canberra to lobby the federal government for a better deal for Queensland. Everybody in 'Team Queensland' knows that without ongoing 80-20 funding for Australia's most decentralised state, with the largest road network in the nation, we will see fewer infrastructure projects and fewer lives saved on our roads. Over time, abolishing 80-20 funding will mean that in future there will be less federal funding for the Bruce and Warrego highways and for other important freight corridors.

There are cost pressures across our infrastructure program, as there are in every state and territory. Arrangements in the National Partnership Agreement on Land Transport Infrastructure provide that a significant change in the scope or cost of a project must be agreed in writing between the parties. I have sought agreement from the Australian government to change the value of several projects, but the Infrastructure Investment Program has added a frustrating delay to these negotiations.

While the Australian government has published a list, it has not formally written to me, as is usual practice. This should occur after the Australian government's Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook. I will provide more information to Queenslanders between the Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook and our own state government midyear budget update. Queenslanders can rest assured that the Palaszczuk Labor government will always fight for our fair share of federal funding from Canberra.