



Speech By  
**Andrew Powell**


**MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE**

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Record of Proceedings, 1 May 2024

**TRANSPORT AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**Report, Motion to Take Note**

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (2.55 pm): I, too, rise to address the Transport and Resources Committee's report titled *Inquiry into scrap metal theft*. I do so following my good friend and colleague, the member for Condamine. I say that it is not just an issue for regional Queensland; it is an issue for South-East Queensland.

I note that the inquiry at the outset commended the City of Moreton Bay for their advocacy on this important issue. As a member who covers the northern and a lot of the rural parts of the City of Moreton Bay, I can attest to that. I know that they made a submission and gave explicit details of particularly the number of sporting facilities that were being stripped of copper from their lighting. I find that quite despicable. In a lot of these places, their facilities are paid for by a combination of Commonwealth, state and council grants but all of that funding is coming from the ratepayer or the taxpayer. Everything else that goes on at those clubs is done through the hard work of volunteers who fundraise through their canteens, through their administrative fees to participate in the sport and through sausage sizzles and the like. Then, these individuals come along and think it is okay to ruin all that by stripping the cabling from the lighting at the footy field. This has such a devastating impact on those community sporting organisations.

I, too, commend the City of Moreton Bay for bringing this issue to the attention of the government and for making a submission on this important matter. I want to point out that it has become a significant safety issue in the southern parts of the electorate of Glass House as well. I hesitate to mention some specific locations but it is happening so frequently that I am going to: the street lighting at the interjection of Steve Irwin Way and Beerburum Road at Beerburum; the lighting across Six Mile Creek at Elimbah on Beerburum Road; and at several locations on the D'Aguiar Highway between Caboolture and Woodford. TMR are having the copper stripped out of the streetlights and TMR will go back and rightly replace it, for obvious safety reasons, only to find that not 24 hours or 48 hours later it is taken again.

I understand that TMR have now hit the pause button because they cannot keep repeating that same pattern of behaviour. They have advised me that they are looking at a number of solutions that will ensure we can get the lights back on but that can prevent any further theft. All I would ask of TMR is that they progress that as quickly as possible. I have had a number of constituents increasingly concerned that some of the intersections—particularly Steve Irwin Way and Beerburum Road at Beerburum—are very unsafe without that lighting. The longer the delay in finding a solution to restore it, the greater the concern within the community that something serious will happen at that intersection. I do not want there to be a serious accident. I do not want there to be a death at that intersection. I want TMR to get this right so that we do not continue to go around in circles, but it does need to happen sooner rather than later.

My message is the same as the many others who have spoken on this. The individuals out there who think this is a worthwhile endeavour need to think again. I think the government needs to take on board the recommendations put forward by this committee in terms of strengthening some of our responses, strengthening some of our laws and ensuring we can act quickly to identify those who are undertaking these thefts and bring them to justice.

We need to find their distribution—the way they are getting rid of the metal—and put an end to that as well. If we can disrupt that network, then we can prevent this stupidity that is costing community organisations hard-earned money and the opportunity to participate in active sport as well as costing communities their safety, particularly on our main roads. That is something I know the residents of places like Beerburum, Elimbah and Wamuran are particularly passionate about. I call on TMR to come up with a solution as quickly as possible to ensure we have safety on those roads.