




Speech By
Hon. Bart Mellish

MEMBER FOR ASPLEY

Record of Proceedings, 13 June 2024

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; REVENUE
AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL; STATE FINANCIAL
INSTRUCTIONS AND METWAY MERGER AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. BJ MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (4.13 pm): I am proud to be part of a government that is taking action on the cost of living. We know that every dollar counts, and the Miles government is helping to put more money back in the pockets of Queenslanders. In this budget we have a raft of initiatives in my portfolio, including 50-cent fares, half-price Airtrain tickets and our 20 per cent rego reduction. Our 50-cent fares initiative is a six-month initiative across the state's Translink network. We are looking to increase public transport patronage and reduce congestion on our busy roads, all while delivering cost-of-living relief. We want more Queenslanders to get on public transport. It has been great to see the positive reception to this initiative in my local area and right across the state.

The savings keep coming. Last weekend I was proud to join the Premier and Deputy Premier to announce 20 per cent off car rego for 12 months. This reduction will start appearing on rego notices sent from 5 August and apply to all light vehicles. The reduction will see benefits for owners of trailers, caravans, motorbikes and light commercial vehicles. It might be challenging for some of those opposite to understand, but most Queenslanders care more about day-to-day living costs than whether a train line is named after a royal.

As we have seen, the Leader of the Opposition's budget response was all over the shop. First he was saying how important it is to honour the budget for the stability of the Public Service. The next day it is just for projects that are fully funded and underway. What did we get today for transport? There were no new roads mentioned—in fact, there were no roads mentioned except maybe one in his own electorate. There was no mention of rail except the LNP's mad, unfunded plan to get the line to Maroochydore for \$6 billion more, but it is not costed. Then there was vague wording around ports that sounded massively undercooked. The LNP has had 3½ years to come up with a transport plan and they have clearly failed Queenslanders. I would like to reiterate that even today those opposite are still promising to deliver Direct Sunshine Coast Rail to Maroochydore. This would be an extra cost to taxpayers of \$6 billion. Where is this money coming from? They also want to cut royalties—the same royalties that are helping to deliver our cost-of-living initiatives like 50-cent fares.

What is the LNP's plan? Is it a magic black hole or, as the former LNP leader Campbell Newman suggested, a magic wand? While the LNP and the member for Broadwater try to find ways to short-change Queenslanders, we are getting on with the job. This includes building roads and rail for Queensland's future with a four-year QTRIP investment of more than \$37 billion. We are investing \$50 million to maximise the state's cyber capabilities, including cybersecurity. We are committing to delivering for the needs of Queenslanders in the 21st century.

Public transport is a vital piece of this puzzle, especially as we combat congestion in our growing state. That is why we are investing \$437 million in bus infrastructure. This budget is also backing Queensland bus manufacturers, with a commitment to build 200 rail replacement buses in the Sunshine State. We are committed to building more than 400 locally manufactured zero-emissions buses also through the Zero Emission Bus Program.

I am proud to be part of a government that is delivering the state's largest ever investment in rail—over \$14 billion worth of projects. We have three very big, revolutionary rail projects. Cross River Rail, of course, is building us a critical second river crossing that will be crucial to increasing the number, frequency and reliability of trains to get through the heart of our network. Then there is the \$5.5 billion Direct Sunshine Coast Rail, one of the largest infrastructure projects to ever be built in that region—if not the biggest. It will shave at least 45 minutes off a peak hour trip each way between the Sunshine Coast and Brisbane. Then there is the Logan and Gold Coast Faster Rail project, which will turn two tracks into four from Kuraby to Beenleigh and remove five level crossings. We are not just revolutionising rail, we are delivering generational infrastructure, keeping Queenslanders connected and moving people through to the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. I congratulate the Premier and the Deputy Premier on a fantastic budget for Queensland, a fantastic budget for transport and main roads and a fantastic budget for the people of Aspley.

The Deputy Speaker has reviewed and approved the remainder of my speech on the budget for incorporation. As such, I ask that the remainder of my speech be incorporated into the *Record of Proceedings*.

The speech read as follows—

Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program 2024-25 to 2027-28

- Our future investment plans are outlined in the 2024-25 to 2027-28 Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program, or QTRIP.
- QTRIP is our annual, four-year rolling investment plan for transport infrastructure across the state.
- From community driven improvements through to the largest, multi-billion infrastructure builds that will define our state for generations to come.
- Queensland is one of the fastest growing states in Australia—by many measures.
- Our population is exploding, tipped to grow 40 per cent from 5.22 million in 2021 to 7.3 million by 2046.
- With this growth, it's critical that we continue to invest in a way that prioritises safety, reliability, resilience, accessibility and regional connectivity.
- To support jobs—an average 28,000 of them across the four years of this cycle of the program.
- To unlock economic opportunity across our state—from the far North, to West Queensland, to metropolitan areas.
- To help you get there safer.
- Get there sooner.
- To help you move—your way.
- It's crucial that we invest in a sustainable, responsible investment program that delivers value-for-money for the people of Queensland.

Investing to get you there safer

- I'm proud that this Budget, and this iteration of QTRIP, strikes that balance between delivering for Queenslanders today, and building for the Queenslanders of tomorrow.
- This year's Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program for 2024-25 to 2027-28 includes \$37.4 billion in investment over the next four years.
- We're investing to get you there safer.
- This includes \$1.892 billion in road safety infrastructure and \$5.23 billion in maintenance, preservation and operations to support a transport network that is safer for all Queenslanders.
- This is in addition to the work with the Australian Government and local representatives to deliver training and education programs such as StreetSmarts Road Safety Education Program, Community Road Safety Grants for community and school-based programs and drink driving education campaigns.

We're investing to get you there sooner.

- While we continue to focus on public transport, all modes of transport are key to helping Queensland move.
- This includes:
 - \$22.362 billion in roads
 - \$14.017 billion in railways
 - \$437 million in bus infrastructure
 - \$315 million active transport
 - \$201 million in maritime
 - \$106 million in multi modal and other infrastructure

- Rail continues to be a primary focus, to reduce congestion on our roads and build a more accessible, inclusive and sustainable network.
- Cross River Rail—not part of the QTRIP program but an essential component of our infrastructure strategy—is a key enabler of our public transport network.
- This is alongside improved rail services generally, notably our landmark Logan and Gold Coast Faster Rail (jointly funded with the Australian Government), Direct Sunshine Coast Rail ((jointly funded with the Australian Government), and our Queensland Train Manufacturing Program.

We're investing to keep you moving

- We're focused on busting congestion with \$200 million allocated for the Local Congestion Busting Program and the Productivity Enhancement Program (\$100 million for each).
- Additionally, we are backing our Bruce Highway increasing our annual funding commitment to \$250 million per annum from 2027-28.
- This investment builds on record investment made over the past nine years.
- The funding will target critical safety and capacity upgrades including the \$470 million Goorganga Floodplain immunity upgrade.
- To improve safety along the Bruce Highway, we developed a whole-of-corridor strategy.

We're delivering for regional and rural Queensland

- Safe and reliable roads are the lifeblood of rural and regional communities.
- We need to keep goods and services moving, in an efficient, affordable and reliable way for communities, businesses and people.
- Highlights include:
 - \$1 billion funding commitment for the Inland Freight Route (jointly funded with the Australian Government)
 - \$500 million for Queensland Beef Corridors (jointly funded with the Australian Government)
 - \$182 million for the Outback Way Queensland Future Priorities (jointly funded with the Australian Government)

Summary

- There is much to be proud of in this Budget, and in this cycle of our annually-refreshed QTRIP program.
- Today, we're in a position to give back to the people of Queensland with some welcome cost-of-living measures that we hope will make things easier.
- And beyond my remarks today, there is so much more to look forward to as our great state continues to grow.
- Investments that will support jobs and unlock economic opportunity.
- That will make our roads safer. More efficient. More reliable. More resilient. More accessible.
- And better connected across all modes of transport—here in South East Queensland and in communities all over the state.
- I encourage all Queenslanders to visit Transport and Main Roads website QTRIP pages to take a look at what's happening and what's planned in your local community.