




Speech By
Cynthia Lui

MEMBER FOR COOK

Record of Proceedings, 12 June 2024

MOTION

Far North Queensland, Infrastructure

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (5.15 pm): I rise to support the amendment to the motion. Only the Miles Labor government is backing in Far North Queensland and it is only the Miles Labor government that is getting on with the job to improve transport across the entire region. In this year's budget alone, our record \$37.4 billion over four years for the Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program 2023-24 is delivering the transport infrastructure needed for the Far North Queensland region. There is: a \$359 million funding commitment for the Captain Cook Highway; a \$300 million funding commitment for the Cairns Western Arterial Road, in the member for Cairns's electorate; a \$262 million funding commitment for the Kuranda Range Road upgrade, in the member for Barron River's electorate; and a \$60 million funding commitment for future stages of the Cape York region package. We are talking about Far North Queensland. Our Big Build is made possible because of the steps our government took to make multinational mining companies pay their fair share, something those opposite will cut.

No-one here understands how important the road network on the Tablelands is for my community than me. It would take more than seven days to get up there to try to understand the issue. Since I became the member for Cook in 2017, I am proud to have delivered millions in funding to improve safety and good road conditions. One section in particular is the Kennedy Highway between Mareeba and Cairns. I supported critical works on the Kuranda Range and the Barron River bridge, because I know how important accessibility is for my community.

At the end of 2023 we saw unprecedented rainfall in the Far North with Cyclone Jasper crossing the coast. We saw significant landslips and structural road damage as a result, with a monsoon trough in January 2024 compounding the damage. It took out the Kuranda Scenic Rail, the north coast line, the Palmerston Highway, Kuranda Range Road, the Captain Cook Highway and the Bloomfield Track. This occurred across a number of different areas in my electorate. A total of \$49.23 million has been spent on repairs up to 30 April 2024. I am proud of our government's investment into fixing roads in the Cook electorate. I want to thank RoadTek and other first responders who supported the recovery effort for the Far North community.

The Miles government understands how important the Barron River bridge is to communities in the Far North. That is why we are fast-tracking the business case to identify the preferred long-term solution for the bridge. The department will continue ongoing detailed inspections and a monitoring program to ensure the bridge remains safe and operational. As part of this program, TMR will carry out testing and maintenance works. Changed traffic conditions will be in place during these works, including single-lane operation of the bridge, to ensure the safety of our motorists. The Miles government is committed to fast-tracking construction following the completion of the business case.

The arrogance of the LNP to come into this House and move a motion regarding infrastructure in the Far North when the only thing those opposite built was a building for themselves is there for all to see. I am proud of my record in the Cook electorate and I will not stop standing up for my community.