



Speech By  
**Jason Hunt**


**MEMBER FOR CALOUNDRA**

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Record of Proceedings, 21 May 2024

**MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Direct Sunshine Coast Rail Line**

 **Mr HUNT** (Caloundra—ALP) (2.41 pm): I am incredibly proud to be part of the Miles Labor government that is delivering fully funded passenger rail to the Sunshine Coast. Since I was elected in 2020 I have worked hard to make this new rail line a reality, and I am proud to say that it is now fully funded and good to go. The Sunshine Coast is one of our fastest growing regions. As the third largest city in Queensland and the ninth largest in Australia, it needs a direct rail connection to South-East Queensland. I am pleased to report that we are getting one thanks to the Miles Labor government.

Yet incredibly, the ‘railway sleepers’ over there on the LNP benches are outraged that Caloundra is getting the first stage. There are crocodile tears over a project they refused to advance one inch. The LNP is disappointed that Caloundra is being prioritised in stage 1. As the member for Caloundra, I am delighted. I will continue to put the interests of Caloundra first. I wonder if the LNP realises that to get to Maroochydore the rail link has to go through Caloundra first. Perhaps they are referring to the member for Maroochydore’s logic-defying plan to link Caloundra and Maroochydore but then not link it to the state rail network, which creates not so much a railway as an amusement park ride.

Over 40 years of achieving precisely nothing, the Queensland LNP has been shown up for what they are—disinterested. It took the Miles Labor government, the Albanese federal Labor government and two local Labor MPs to do in one term what the LNP could not be bothered delivering in decades. The previous four LNP members who represented Caloundra have included a cabinet minister, a state treasurer and two premiers, and with that level of representation they did not manage a single extra railway spike hammered into the ground for the Sunshine Coast. I remind the House that this is the party that could not erect a single set of traffic lights at Ridgewood Road in 17 years; \$3.7 million was too much effort for the LNP on the Sunshine Coast. The two federal LNP members on the Sunshine Coast are more concerned about where they are going to put their nuclear reactors and were so half-hearted about passenger rail they refused to pass a budget with a rail commitment in it.

Funding for Sunshine Coast passenger rail has been provided by state and federal Labor governments, and that is an irrefutable fact. The state LNP was no better when last in government—not a single dollar was committed by them. By contrast, \$5.5 billion has been committed by both state and federal Labor governments. Even if we include the cost of the six corflute signs the state LNP had made up for Sunshine Coast rail, that means the actual amount of money spent by the state LNP is equal to 0.0002 of one per cent of the total spend. What a fantastic expression of how much the Sunshine Coast means to the LNP. Our money is there on the table; \$5.5 billion is ready to go. The LNP does not support progressive coal royalties, so there is \$9 billion they will have to find if elected. We all know what the LNP does when they need to scrape up dollars—they cut, they cut hard and then they sack people.

One of their own shadow ministers has identified another \$10 billion in cuts—sorry, pruning—so they are going to rip \$9 billion out of the revenue stream. Then we are supposed to believe that, having struggled to put a set of traffic lights on Caloundra Road, they are going to build a railway line. Nobody believes that—not even the LNP. This fully funded, region shaping project is only possible now because of three vital components that were needed to make it happen: a federal Labor government that actually passed a budget with matched funding; a Miles state Labor government willing to do what an LNP minister, an LNP treasurer and two LNP premiers would not do; and two local Labor MPs prepared to do the work to make it happen. We are building the biggest public transport project the coast has ever seen, and my community cannot wait to see it started. Only a Labor government will deliver this. You can only have confidence in a Labor government to see this line operational.