



Speech By  
**Ray Stevens**


**MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH**

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Record of Proceedings, 23 May 2024

## ADJOURNMENT

### Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 3

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (6.56 pm): With 85 per cent of the Gold Coast Light Rail going through my electorate of Mermaid Beach, I am totally disappointed at the disruption and uncaring attitude the constructing body has demonstrated to residents and businesses along the route as they continue on their unfettered program with total disregard for community concerns. This construction was supposed to be different from light rail stages 1 and 2 in that it was to be done in staged segments to minimise the pain and suffering for businesses and residents. The government said they had learned from stages 1 and 2 and they would build stage 3 in a more caring and considered program.

What happened? There is light rail construction from Pacific Fair to Burleigh, and the businesses along these sealed-off frontages along the Gold Coast Highway have either gone broke or are going broke. Southport and Surfers have still not recovered from light rail stages 1 and 2 construction. I met with residents at Nobby Beach the other day, and one man living on the highway with two very young children said he could not get any sleep, with the construction noise going right through the night. Is he going to cop that noise until the end of 2025, when the opening date is currently scheduled? Surely there can be a better, staged construction program that delivers shorter periods of inconvenience and suffering to smaller sections as they progress down the highway.

If this is the standard this government accepts for light rail construction, I feel for southern residents from Burleigh to the airport if light rail stage 4 ever sees the light of day—not that I think their Labor mate Albanese has any intention to fund 55 per cent of \$7.6 billion, as the cost estimate of light rail stage 4 has blown out to, and that is without the normal Labor blowouts and costs this state government adds to every piece of infrastructure it tries to build in Queensland, when it actually constructs something. The \$250 million BPIC union-demanded cost overrun for light rail stage 3 that the construction body refused to pay but which was picked up by the taxpayers of Queensland by the Labor government is just another classic case of a financially incompetent government dancing to the tune of union demands.

What has happened to the corollary benefits of suffering the construction of light rail stage 3 through the Mermaid Beach electorate such as upgrades to Hedges Avenue and Albatross Avenue, which are in dire need of modernisation? The footpath in Hedges Avenue needs doubling and smoothing at a minimum, and the undergrounding of power lines to eliminate pedestrian and cycle impediments is essential. These should be the legacy projects from light rail stage 3 construction as promised to residents, and they should start now. I cannot wait for October so that Queenslanders can show Labor the door in 2024.