




Speech By
Ray Stevens

MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH

Record of Proceedings, 10 December 2024

ADJOURNMENT

Mermaid Beach Electorate, Gold Coast Light Rail

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (12.14 am): Light rail stage 3 is 85 per cent through my electorate of Mermaid Beach. The construction of this project has caused incredible pain and disruption to the residents, businesses and commuters of my electorate. In the 2023-24 budget Queensland taxpayers were slugged an extra \$250 million for the CFMEU BPIC wage blowout which the construction company, Holland's construction, refused to pay. In the shadow of this year's election, when the Labor government should have been in caretaker mode they granted Holland's construction another \$330 million of taxpayer money, much of which will end up in the pockets of CFMEU members. The project has now blown out to an operational date of mid 2026. To accommodate this cash splash for the CFMEU and Holland's, the Labor government inspired a complete road closure notice for the Gold Coast Highway through my electorate for two weeks at night-time from 8 pm until 5 am in the morning, giving just nine days notice. This would have forced highway traffic through my residential areas and caused untold disruption to residents and commuters alike.

I am pleased to say that, following representations from me to the newly minted LNP transport minister, Mr Mickelberg, the minister overturned the ridiculous proposal to allow traffic to traverse the Gold Coast Highway via one lane. Sanity prevailed. There was disruption and inconvenience caused to my residents by the cavalier attitude of the construction company. Residents have been locked out of their driveways for five weeks at a time, and vibration and unbearable noise levels are inflicted on a regular basis, with the G:link authority overseeing construction being forced to repeatedly take remedial action to address justified complaints. This project will be another 18 months to finalisation, and I am calling on the construction company to take greater care and have consideration of the inconvenience and suffering they are inflicting on my residents as they continue their drawn-out and disruptive project.

Light rail stage 3 has been derailed by CFMEU union demands, leading to a blown-out budget and a time delay due to a lack of union influenced productivity output—just 3½ days per week of productivity—which tells everyone about their union elected government members and their allegiance to their union masters. Light rail stage 3 is a classic example of Labor's financial blowouts. This project was originally to cost around \$800 million; now it will cost over \$1.5 billion. This reflects Labor's cost blowouts on just about every infrastructure project they approve. Cross River Rail is a classic example, from \$5.9 billion to over \$13 billion.