




Speech By
Bart Mellish

MEMBER FOR ASPLEY

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Direct Sunshine Coast Rail Line

 **Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (2.32 pm): We know that in late January the LNP started their public campaign to kill rail on the Sunshine Coast via their proxy LNP group Sunshine Coast 2032. This is the group that wants to sell off parts of the CAMCOS corridor to developers and replace rail with buses. A report on the ABC from 29 January states—

Jarrold Bleijie has thrown doubt on the promise he made during the election campaign to extend a rail line to Maroochydore on the Sunshine Coast in time for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

He seized on a submission to the government's 100-day Games review that claimed the cost of the project could blow out from \$12 billion to more than \$20b.

Initially I thought this was just the member for Kawana freewheeling in his new-found power and status, making up figures on the fly, but it looks like the transport minister has also been up to his neck in it all along. The now published ministerial diaries reveal the minister met the group Sunshine Coast 2032 on 9 January, the day before submissions closed on the games 100-day review.

Taking a step back, the business case finalised last year has rail to Maroochydore costing \$12 billion, but the Deputy Premier now says it is \$20 billion. Did the minister challenge this group on the \$20 billion figure that the Deputy Premier has been flaunting? If not, why not? The minister and the Deputy Premier definitively know that the \$20 billion figure is wrong because we learned it on 5 February this year at a committee hearing, when I directly asked the minister's department. With regard to the cost of the Direct Sunshine Coast Rail Line they said it had not changed. The minister's own director-general went on to say—

... but I cannot advise the committee at this time of anything fundamentally different from the estimates we had at hand.

There is no increase from \$12 billion to \$20 billion, according to the minister's own department. I will cut them some slack. If the figure cannot be confirmed from the transport department, maybe it came from the Deputy Premier's own department. I asked the Deputy Premier's hand-picked director-general and he said—

I am saying that we are not in the business of supplying to the Deputy Premier the cost of rail projects.

The Deputy Premier and the minister have been caught out peddling false information to the media and the public. They are all at sea on the Direct Sunshine Coast Rail Line. Imagine striving for a decade to be a minister or a deputy premier from the Sunshine Coast only to start work once you get in the job to kill the biggest infrastructure project, the biggest transport project the region has ever seen.

The LNP need to come clean to Sunshine Coast locals and admit they misled them during the last election campaign. They never had any intention of delivering rail to Maroochydore. It is a sham and they should hang their heads in shame. What a disgrace. This new transport minister is gearing Queensland up for cutting this project that is much needed. This minister has not turned a sod or cut a

ribbon on one single transport project since becoming minister but he has had more than 10 press conferences complaining about how hard his job is. There is no sympathy from Queenslanders sitting in traffic all thinking the same thing: do your job.