



Speech By
Bart Mellish

MEMBER FOR ASPLEY

Record of Proceedings, 11 February 2026

TRANSPORT AFFORDABILITY AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (3.45 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Fair Trading Act 1989, the Fair Trading (Fuel Price Board) Regulation 2017, the Fair Trading (Fuel Price Reporting) Regulation 2018 and the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Transport Affordability Amendment Bill 2026 [166](#).

Tabled paper: Transport Affordability Amendment Bill 2026, explanatory notes [167](#).

Tabled paper: Transport Affordability Amendment Bill 2026, statement of compatibility with human rights [168](#).

I rise to introduce the Transport Affordability Amendment Bill 2026. It is a bill that does what it says on the tin. This bill aims to address the growing affordability pressures that Queenslanders are facing, specifically the cost of getting around. It is no secret that Queenslanders are struggling, be that with the rising price of groceries, rent, the mortgage, electricity, health care or education. The reality is that families are having to make harder choices more often. This bill goes directly to the cost of filling up the car to get to work, school, the shops or hospital and it speaks to the cost of catching public transport for those who rely on it each and every day, because transport is not optional. Getting to work or school every day is not a 'nice to have'; it is a necessity. For households across the state, particularly in those outer suburbs, regional cities and rural communities, it is unavoidable to pay these bills. When fuel prices spike or you need to pay your rego the same week as your rates, you just have to do it. The family budget absorbs the hit, often at the expense of other essentials. This is the problem we are seeking to address.

This bill does two clear and practical things. Firstly, it introduces a fairer fuel-pricing framework for Queensland—a framework that puts an end to extreme price spikes and restores basic predictability at the bowser. Secondly, it locks in Labor's 50-cent public transport fares in legislation, ensuring that this proven cost-of-living measure cannot be quietly wound back or cut behind closed doors.

This is not symbolic legislation. This is not aspirational; it is practical, targeted and grounded in evidence. Members do not have to take my word for it: the RACQ has long been advocating for targeted intervention in the Queensland fuel price market, because for far too long it is Queenslanders' hip pockets that have been pumped at the petrol station. Specifically, Brisbane motorists are paying more for petrol than drivers in any other capital city. It is an award we have received three years in a row, but it is hardly a gong to write home about. It is because we have this extended and unregulated fuel price cycle that is controlled by major companies looking to extort the unique conditions we have here in Queensland, meaning we are faced with sharper peaks, longer periods of high prices and greater uncertainty for those trying to time their fill-ups. It is a fuel price cycle that disadvantages Queenslanders who are already struggling with affordability.

The RACQ's own analysis has shown that unleaded retail margins in Brisbane are more than double those in Perth. On top of that, our fuel price cycle lasts about six weeks, meaning Queenslanders only have about eight chances to get cheap petrol per year. Imagine having to wait six weeks to fully fill the tank again. It is just impossible for the people who rely on their car to get around. In comparison, the Adelaide price cycle lasts about 2½ weeks and in Perth it is a weekly cycle—that is, 52 chances each year to get cheaper petrol. In other words, the difference is not explained by geography, supply chains or global oil prices alone. Simply, it is explained by the price-setting decisions of retailers. Crucially, the RACQ has been very clear about the solution. In 2025 the RACQ said—

There is absolutely no reason why drivers in Brisbane should be paying so much ... to fill up their cars compared to drivers in other capital cities. This is why we're calling for the State Government to regulate the market and impose a five-cent cap on fuel price increases to bring an end to dramatic and unjustified margins.

They have called for regulation to cap daily fuel price increases. While the Premier has said his government was 'looking into it', it has now been over 12 months and there has been crickets from the government. Now is the time for action because if you live in an area without frequent public transport, you drive; if you work shifts, travel between job sites or live outside major centres, you drive; if you have caring responsibilities, mobility needs or limited transport options, you drive; and when fuel prices spike unpredictably those families are left with no buffer.

What those families need is action not a slogan. That is exactly what this bill does. Under this bill fuel retailers will be required to publish their fuel price for the following day by 2 pm. Fuel prices cannot increase by more than five cents per litre from the previous day's lowest price. Once that price is set it cannot be increased for the full 24-hour period. Retailers can still drop prices during the day, but if they do that lower price becomes that new baseline. Simply put, this legislation ends the ability to jack up prices by 20, 30 or even 60 cents overnight; this legislation provides certainty to consumers about what they will pay tomorrow; and this legislation preserves competition by allowing retailers to undercut each other but not to exploit sudden spikes.

This model builds on reforms already introduced by Labor in Queensland, including real-time fuel price reporting. It takes transparency and turns it into protection. It is informed by what works elsewhere. Western Australia has long required fuel retailers to lock in prices for a 24-hour period. This result has been lower margins and more stable pricing for motorists. The difference in outcomes is clear. Queensland motorists pay more because Queensland motorists are exposed to greater volatility and weaker protections.

This bill does not ask a misbehaving market to change voluntarily, it does not assume competition alone in a concentrated market will solve the problem, it sets clear rules and enforces them. That is as important here in Brisbane as it is in Beaudesert, Bundaberg, Townsville, Cairns or the cape, because fuel affordability is not just a metro issue. In regional and remote areas Queenslanders rely on their cars more than ever. There are longer distances and fewer alternatives—and that is not just for the school run or the daily commute. It could be for getting to the doctor, to uni, to TAFE or to the job site.

When prices spike for no good reason other than a major company wanting to cash in, it is our regional communities who feel it first. I cannot guarantee that this bill will eliminate price differences between regions, but it does seek to stamp out volatility and prevent unjustified daily increases everywhere in the state. It is a baseline protection for all Queenslanders regardless of postcode. I think that is a fair way to go about things, don't you, Mr Deputy Speaker?

The second major pillar of this bill is the protection of Labor's 50-cent public transport fares. Queensland Labor introduced 50-cent fares in 2024. It was a nation-leading reform and it worked. Public transport patronage increased significantly. Queenslanders saved money and people travelled more often. It is so successful that the Crisafulli LNP government has tried to rebadge it and claim it as their own. If I had 50 cents for every time the LNP tried to claim 50-cent fares I would be back to paying full fares and then some. It is a good thing Queenslanders can see right through the blue washing. Fifty cent fares were criticised for being a gimmick, an election ploy, but we knew what it was and what could be done. It was cost-of-living relief delivered on a statewide and nation-leading scale.

The LNP might say that they have locked in permanent 50-cent fares, but right now there is nothing stopping this government, or any future government, from quietly increasing public transport fares. There would not even be a peep. To people who rely on 50-cent fares to balance their weekly budget that uncertainty matters. Families who have built public transport into their weekly budget deserve to know that the rules will not change overnight. Under this bill if a government wishes to increase public transport fares above 50 cents it cannot do so by executive decision alone. It must provide at least 28 days notice and it must bring a motion before this House that would be debated and voted on. That is transparency. That is accountability. This is an opportunity for the government to practise what they preach, an opportunity to lock in Labor's 50-cent fares. Will the Premier play politics

or will he squib it? Will he get behind this straightforward measure? If the government believes fares should rise, it should be prepared to explain why openly, publicly and on the record.

This bill ensures that any decision to increase fares is not hidden in a regulation or implemented without scrutiny. Transport affordability is not just about dollars and cents; it is about trust. Queenslanders have seen too many examples of promises made and quietly walked away from—from this LNP government specifically. By legislating these protections this bill provides certainty. It tells Queenslanders that relief measures that they rely on will not disappear without a fight.

On this side of the House we have a strong track record of supporting Queenslanders in need. Under Labor, a record cost-of-living budget was handed down which helped every single Queensland household. It was Labor that provided \$1,000 off every Queenslanders' power bill. That is a measure that was not continued under this LNP government. It was Labor that reduced registration costs by 20 per cent—again another measure that was not continued by this LNP government. In fact, they went even further by jacking up rego costs by an extra 3.4 per cent, essentially overseeing an almost 24 per cent hike in rego costs on the LNP's watch.

We know those opposite have a track record of cuts. Right now the LNP might be more focused on patching the cracks in their party room, but on this side of the House we are focused on delivering real outcomes for real Queenslanders. Filling up the car should not be a game of beating the bowser. It should be a consistent and fair system. No government, current or future, should be able to wind back 50-cent fares without a really good reason.

With the introduction of this bill our team will be going out to Queenslanders to see what they think. We want to see their voices elevated on the issue of transport affordability. We want to see what the government has to say on the issue. Now is their chance to stop the price gouging and support real action to drive down the cost of transport here in Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Mr MELLISH (Aspley—ALP) (3.55 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee.