




Speech By
Michael Crandon

MEMBER FOR COOMERA

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ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (5.57 pm): I congratulate Mr Speaker on his new role. I think he is doing a fantastic job. It is an apprenticeship for the first few months, and I think he is coming along rather well. Once we get those opposite sorted out so they know when to interject to make a difference, we might see some positive things happening.

I also congratulate my darling wife. I have been in this House now for 16 years. This is my sixth term. To be perfectly honest, it is our sixth term. She stands side by side with me. I was talking to the Clerk a little while ago about Pauline and the work that she does in the office. She is a volunteer there and puts in a big effort not just in the office but also around the electorate. Of course, she takes care of business at home as well.

My longest serving staff member has been with me for 27 years. She came with me from my previous role into this role. I want to thank Trish for everything that she has done to keep things going in the right direction as far as the office is concerned. I also have Judy, who has been there now for eight years. She will probably hit me because it might even be nine years by now. Time just seems to get away from us. I also have Jodie, who has been with us more than four years. She has been a fantastic support to Trish, in particular, in the office. I want to welcome two new staff members whom we met leading up to the election—Lisa and Jacqui—who are both committed to the people of the northern Gold Coast and committed to the people of the Coomera electorate and who work tirelessly every day to assist them with the issues they have.

I want to thank my campaign team. Many of them have been with us for several elections. They have done a fantastic job. The Young LNP and their enthusiasm and involvement in the campaign did not go unnoticed certainly when we consider that the average age of the Coomera electorate is very appropriate for them. The average age in the electorate of Coomera is just under 32. In fact, around 40 per cent of the electorate is under 25 years of age. It is a very young electorate in that regard. I do not reflect that average age. I would just like to make that point.

Finally, I want to talk about the people on the northern Gold Coast. The member for Hill talked about first having 18,000 electors and now having over 40,000. In 2009 we had 28,000 electors; we now have 55,000 electors. We have a lot of expats from other countries in the electorate who are not yet able to vote. I look forward to them coming on to the electoral roll. With them and all of the young people, that takes us to around 110,000 people in the state seat of Coomera. The state seat of Coomera is the largest by population and the largest by voter numbers by far. In fact, the voter numbers are in the order of 36 per cent over quota—the quota being around 40,000, which is what the member for Hill was talking about.

I thank them and I thank them for believing in the Crisafulli government and a fresh start for Queensland, and that started with the Right Priorities for Queensland's Future. That is where it all started going back a few years now. We developed a plan to tell the people of Queensland what we

planned to do, where we wanted to go and how we wanted to help them. After getting a lot of feedback about what they wanted, we developed the Right Priorities for Queensland's Future. That was after Labor's 10 years of crisis and chaos and 10 years of being stuck in the slow lane.

There is no better example of some of the projects that were being slowly but surely built by the Labor government than the 2017 election commitment that Labor put forward when they said, 'We're going to build a train station at Pimpama.' It was in October 2017 when they said, 'We're going to build a train station at Pimpama.' That train station is still under construction. We will be lucky if that train station is completed by the end of 2025—eight years to build a train station! The worst part of it is that it started out as a \$40 million project; now it is a \$150 million project. It has gone from \$40 million to \$150 million eight years down the track. They were stuck in the slow lane right from the start.

When they made that announcement in 2017, they did not tell anybody and they did not give any details about when they were planning on doing it. When they made the announcement it was like, 'We're going to be doing this in the next five minutes.' No, they were not. It is a bit like the hospital. In 2020 they finally came to the table after a lot of hard work and after a lot of fighting from the people of Coomera and said, 'We're going to build a hospital.' No, they were not. They put \$3 million into some planning. We had already committed \$4 million to the same planning, but they said they were going to build a hospital. The problem was that in 2020 they were looking at a block of land that had some major issues. I will tell members how bad those issues were: right now on that block we only have some towers coming up out of the ground. They are the lift towers. That is all that is under construction. The construction workers are still working on the preparation of the site. It has taken this long—4½ years—just to get the preparation done. And guess what? It is not finished. They are still preparing the land.

Fortunately, we have a rescue plan for our health crisis, and I will talk about that in a little while. That was one example—eight years. Another example was in 2019. The federal government committed \$55 million. Then eventually the then minister was brought kicking and screaming to the table to tip in another \$55 million for a \$110 million project at exit 49. That was May-June 2019. Does anyone care to guess when it was opened? It was opened in early 2025. From 2019 to 2025, it took six years to duplicate exit 49.

Mr McDonald: A great local member fighting for it.

Mr CRANDON: I take that interjection—absolutely. He is a top bloke! Ask anybody in the electorate of Coomera. In fact, there are so many people coming to Coomera that I get the impression they are leaving other members' electorates in droves. It was a \$110 million project. What did that end up costing us? It cost \$140 million—another \$30 million because of the delays. It was \$110 million—up to \$140 million. That was nowhere near as bad as \$40 million up to \$150 million for the Pimpama train station but it took six years to build it.

This is the biggie—everybody references it: the Coomera Connector. It was to cost \$1.5 billion for six lanes. No. It is \$3.1 billion for four lanes in some sections—it is no longer six lanes—and it is still not finished. In fact, when we came to power we discovered that the project construction was 10 months behind. We have done a little bit of work on that. Fortunately, we have been able to work out a way of bringing that timeline forward so that the north section of the first stage of the Coomera Connector will be finished by the end of 2025 as originally promised. Remember it was 10 months behind schedule when we came into government and we have turned that around.

Enough was enough, as we have heard. The Crisafulli government was elected and we said, 'These are our promises. We are going to provide a commitment to the electorate that is very difficult in the delivery but quite simple and straightforward in the explanation of it.' The first election commitment was making our community safer, and that really did resonate with people because each of our electorates would have stories about what has happened with youth crime et cetera. Our first priority to make our community safer was increasing the number of police on the beat through retention and attraction. I note that we already have a significant number of additional police—well above what was delivered by Labor in their last term of government. We are already well ahead of that.

Other priorities to achieve that election commitment include: restoring consequences for actions, the heart of the Youth Justice Act—we have already been working on that; and ensuring judges can impose sentences that reflect community expectations. Once again, we are working on that. We are not at the end of that, but we have already delivered significantly in that regard. Another priority to achieve that is diverting young lives from crime by reforming early intervention programs. We heard about one of those today—the Men of Business Academy, a commitment to a school in Southport. I congratulate the member for Southport for being involved in that. They are a terrific group of people—Men of Business. They are doing a fantastic job already. I can see them going from strength to strength. Another priority to achieve that is fixing the broken child safety and residential care systems to prevent vulnerable kids from heading down the same path. That is on the agenda as well and is being worked on.

Another election commitment was easier access to health services. I talked about that briefly before. Our priorities to deliver easier access to health services include driving down ambulance ramping and healthcare waitlists that have hit 45 per cent around Queensland. We are going to turn those around.

Another priority to achieve that is empowering local decision-makers in the health sector. There is nothing more important than allowing local decision-makers to make the decisions that have an impact on their area. After all, they know their patch, just like members here know their patch. They know what their patch is about. They know what the issues are in their patch. It is so important to let those decision-makers do that.

Another priority to achieve that is providing more healthcare professionals through retention and attraction. We have already heard about our Hospital Rescue Plan. Let's talk about that for a minute. I mentioned the Coomera Hospital earlier. It was \$1.3 billion; it is now almost \$2.3 billion. That is almost a billion dollar blowout and we were not going to have many of the services. I am not going to go through what we were not going to have then, but I can tell you now that, through the Hospital Rescue Plan, instead of the Coomera Hospital having 405 beds it will be in excess of 600 beds. That is the first thing we are doing. We are going to deliver a hospital that will have an adequate, appropriate car park. We are going to have a Coomera Hospital that will have a road system around it that is actually going to work in the fastest growing region in Queensland. The second busiest road on the Gold Coast is Foxwell Road, so we have to properly develop that and the health minister is committed to doing that.

Another election commitment was securing our housing foundations. We have heard a lot about that as well. Our priorities to deliver securing our housing foundations include improving housing affordability with more land supply. It beggars belief that we have not been able to get more land supply out. We are committed to doing that and we are using innovative ways to do it.

Another priority to achieve that is helping Queenslanders realise their dream of owning their own home. We have a raft of measures, the latest of which is to co-own properties with people up to a million dollars to allow them to get into their own property and improve on 62 per cent of home ownership in Queensland. By the way, there is 62 per cent home ownership in Queensland; it is 58 per cent in the Coomera electorate—58 per cent versus 62 per cent. We are already behind the eight ball on the northern Gold Coast in that regard.

Another priority to achieve that is working closely with local governments—this is part of the plan—to plan and deliver regional plans and more housing for Queenslanders. That is at the crux of it. There are so many regional and city plans that are just languishing because those opposite were stuck in the slow lane.

I want to close on a local level. Many of the projects I am going to talk about in the next few minutes those opposite said no to. They did not say no once, but several times. They kept on going back. We kept on saying, 'You cannot keep saying no to these things. We have to do something about providing these projects to the people of Queensland.' What do we have? First of all, let me talk about my schools.

Pimpama State School has grown from about 250 kids to 800 kids and it has never had a genuine canteen. An education area was converted into a canteen. We have committed to building a canteen appropriate for Pimpama State School. That is the first project.

The second project is a signalised crossing at Foxwell Road. It is a TMR project, but it is for one of my schools. The Coomera State Special School is going to have a signalised crossing to make it possible for the young people who go to that special school to safely cross the road, and that is going to be delivered.

Cedar Creek State School's car park is another project with transport and main roads. It is a despicable car park situation that drives everyone mad. We have made a commitment to work with the City of Gold Coast to develop that car park, and it will be handed across to the City of Gold Coast for them to look after going forward from there.

For Ormeau Woods State High School there is \$500,000 for a shade for their oval. They have nearly completed the project. They are doing a wonderful job. It looks absolutely fantastic. I cannot wait to see the finished product. It really is something that would attract young people to sit around the oval and watch sports and so forth.

Pimpama State Secondary College will receive \$500,000 for a junior school playground and water bubblers. Once again those opposite did not see the need, so there is \$500,000 to take care of those needs at that school.

Norfolk Village State School received a \$450,000 commitment for the next stage of the open space nature playground.

For Coomera Rivers State School there is another \$450,000 commitment for tiered seating at the existing playground. That is partially completed.

Pimpama State Primary College will receive funding for a senior school playground. We are talking about a whole bunch of playgrounds. What do playgrounds do? Kids play in them. They get to work with each other. They get to interact with one another. They get to know how to live in society. That is all fundamental to the upbringing of our children, yet those opposite were not prepared to invest in them.

With regard to Ormeau State School, the LNP government will deliver \$450,000 for a roof shelter on the multipurpose court. We are the melanoma capital of the world. They need this shelter in that area.

Woongoolba State School will receive \$475,000 for playground equipment and to replace furniture at the school. The school is 150 years old. Thankfully, the furniture is not 150 years old. It is about 30 to 35 years old, so it is well past its use-by date.

There are just a couple of other ones. In relation to the dedicated east-west connector, there is a commitment to do the work. I see that is in the budget. I will talk about that in my budget speech. There is funding for accelerated planning and sequencing of these interchanges on the northern Gold Coast north and south of Foxwell Road.

There is \$5 million for the Pimpama PCYC to add to the \$5 million we originally got a few years ago in 2022, I think it was, to take us to \$10 million so we can progress that.

Finally, there is \$68,000 for the Ormeau Football Club. They asked for \$68,000 on a \$2 million project and the previous state Labor government said no. We have \$68,000 to go towards a new kitchen and seating facilities. They said no to so many things.

I want to finish by thanking the Premier for his leadership. Thank you, Premier. Together we will deliver a fresh start for Queensland.