




Speech By  
**Hon. Ros Bates**

**MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA**

---

Record of Proceedings, 3 April 2025

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY**

 **Hon. RM BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (Minister for Finance, Trade, Employment and Training) (6.13 pm): I rise to thank my community for the opportunity to continue to serve them for another four years. This marks my sixth term representing the electorate of Mudgeeraba in this parliament, and I remain as committed to tirelessly serving our community as the day I first stood in this place. It is my great privilege and honour to be an advocate for our community in the Queensland parliament, and I am deeply grateful for the ongoing support and encouragement from locals across my electorate—from Austinville and Advancetown, to Bonogin, Carrara, Clagiraba, Lower Beechmont, Gilston, Merrimac, Mudgeeraba, Natural Bridge, Neranwood, Numinbah Valley, Reedy Creek, Robina, Springbrook, Tallai, parts of Tallebudgera Valley and Worongary.

While of course elections are about much more than polling statistics, it is humbling to reflect on the fact that I have been elected on first preferences in this past election. It is an incredible result which I consider to be a sign of the trust my community has in my ability to continue to deliver for them in this place. I will continue to work tirelessly to repay this faith, just as I have done since my election in 2009.

As always, I wish to thank my incredible team of volunteers for their efforts in delivering this result. There are so many people to mention, but special thanks go to my friends Richard and Cheryl Royle for giving up two weeks of their lives to help me. Thank you to Richard, who fed me for the two weeks of the pre-polling part of the campaign.

Election campaigns are a significant undertaking, and it simply would not be possible without the tireless efforts of many locals who selflessly gave up their time to help around the electorate. Thank you for the countless hours manning booths, scrutinising votes, putting up and pulling down signage, and doing the numerous other tasks that are critical to a successful campaign. Your hard work did not go unnoticed, and I wish to thank each and every incredible volunteer who lent a helping hand. A special thank you in particular must go to my amazing electorate office staff, Nicole, Hannah and Lisa. You were just extraordinary during this campaign.

My thanks also go to the many local sporting clubs and community groups who give so much back to our community. Anyone who knows me knows how proud I am to be patron of many amazing grassroots clubs, and I have the jersey for every one of my local clubs to prove it. I look forward to continuing to support your efforts on the sporting fields across our Mudgeeraba electorate.

I wish to also acknowledge our many wonderful local schools, who are now in their final week of term 1. All of my schools know how much I enjoy welcoming local students to this place each year, and I look forward to attending many more tours and mock parliaments over the years to come.

Last but certainly not least, thank you to my family, who have been my tireless supporters over many years and many campaigns. My sisters, Josie and Cath, and my children, Ben, Greg and Jill, and their partners, Tom and Mai: thank you for everything you have done and everything you continue to do.

In previous years I have used my address-in-reply as an opportunity to reflect on our local campaigns for upgrades and important projects as well as to highlight the many wins we have had for our community—a report card of sorts. I am proud to have delivered many significant upgrades and new investment in infrastructure for our community over the years, despite the significant roadblocks from a Labor government that was not interested in delivering for Mudgeeraba constituents.

Despite this, I have never stopped fighting for our community and the investment and infrastructure we need. Since my last address-in-reply we have seen the completion of the Nerang-Murwillumbah Road upgrade. This saw a total of \$38.11 million into much needed safety improvements which I have been calling for over many years. This included: wide-centre-line marking from Beaudesert-Nerang Road to Tangara Road; a number of channelised right turns down the road; pavement widening and sealing; the installation and modification of safety barriers, including motorcycle underrun protection; vegetation clearing to increase visibility; and the installation and modification of warning signs and line markings.

Since my last address-in-reply, I have also been very pleased to see a footpath between Forestry Road and Carricks Road finally built for the schoolkids in Springbrook. This is something I have been speaking about for many years, and I am proud that this has finally been delivered for our Springbrook community to ensure students can walk safely on this dangerous stretch of road. As I have reflected upon before in this place, as more people continue to call the Mudgeeraba electorate home we need the road infrastructure—and, indeed, infrastructure more generally—to keep pace with population growth.

The Gold Coast is renowned for our incredible lifestyle, and it is essential that we continue to ensure that locals can enjoy this special part of Queensland with services and infrastructure they expect and indeed deserve. On the topic of road infrastructure, it is no secret that I have raised the need for local upgrades to places like the Austinville causeway many times over the years. In fact, the Department of Transport and Main Roads have already done significant planning in relation to an upgrade to the Austinville causeway following my relentless advocacy, and I thank the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. TMR plans suggested an upgrade will include: constructing upstream wing walls to prevent debris blockage; improving the road alignment; constructing new pavements on both approaches to the causeway; and constructing retaining walls. It is disappointing that the former Labor government sat on these plans since 2019, but in any event I am proud to confirm that this Crisafulli LNP government is getting on with the job of fixing the Austinville causeway. Unlike Labor, we will consult with locals.

On the local schools front, I was very pleased to see the installation of additional flashing school lights during the last parliamentary term, following my continued advocacy on this issue. I am proud to confirm that, as promised, there are even more flashing school lights on their way for local schools. I know how important it is that we have these flashing lights at schools across Mudgeeraba to ensure students can get to school safely by car or by foot. It is something I have spoken about at length in this place, and I will continue to advocate for ways to improve student safety across our community.

I have said many times that the best results in politics come from the local community when government recognises local expertise, provides the necessary support and then gets out of the way of locals getting the job done. It is why I have repeatedly advocated for funding for our local Landcare group to clean up Mudgeeraba Creek which tragically contains all sorts of dumped road rubbish, including on occasions the kitchen sink. These local volunteers have worked on the creek for decades and they know it better than anyone else, which is why I have repeatedly called for funding to support their efforts to clean up the creek and bring back the platypus who used to frequent the area. While Queensland Labor ignored this sensible grassroots community solution, the Crisafulli LNP government is already getting on with the job of delivering this funding.

Similarly, our funding commitment to My Community Legal in Robina, which provides free legal advice to locals in need of help, is already in the works, thanks to the Crisafulli LNP government and our wonderful Attorney-General. This is a community legal centre that was ignored time and time again by the former Queensland Labor government, whereas we are doing exactly what we said we would do before the election to support this important pro bono work.

Anyone who has listened to me speak in this place knows I am very passionate about ensuring community safety, and it is no secret that crime is a major concern to the constituents of the Mudgeeraba electorate, as it has been for many years. Indeed, crime has often been front and centre of the minds of Gold Coast locals, from the hooning problems in our valley to incidents of juvenile crime, just like the other day when teens kicked in the windows of a local pharmacy following Cyclone Alfred. I really want to thank again the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and the Minister for Police for recognising

that we need CCTV cameras at the corner of Pine Creek Road and Nerang Murwillumbah Road where more than 50 hoons regularly congregate. We will put in the CCTV cameras that the locals in Springbrook and Numinbah Valley have been asking for, for years.

I was also very pleased to be part of the Crisafulli LNP government doing exactly what we said we would do before the election with our first tranche of Making Queensland Safer laws already passed in this place and the second tranche introduced this week. We will continue to listen to the experts and we will be relentless in strengthening Queensland's laws, ensuring the rights of victims of crime are put before the rights of juveniles. It is obvious that 10 years of weakened laws and dithering on these strategies from the former Labor government will not be able to be fixed overnight, but we are making progress. After a decade of neglect, the Crisafulli LNP government is ensuring there are finally consequences for action in Queensland. In that vein, I am very excited to be part of a proactive Crisafulli LNP government which has got straight to work on delivering our election commitments. We are not wasting time, unlike those opposite who are more interested in a photo op than actually seeing a shovel turning the ground. We are committed to delivering a fresh start for Queensland, and across the board we are already seeing this start to take shape.

I look forward to continuing to fight for the local issues that are important to my constituents, including the infrastructure and investments we need across the electorate of Mudgeeraba. I will continue to be a fierce advocate for our community, and I reiterate my thanks to my community for their faith and trust in re-electing me in this House. In this place, the 58th Parliament, I now have the great privilege of serving as the Minister for Finance, Trade, Employment and Training. As a government, we know there is a significant task ahead to repair a decade of Labor's economic vandalism and fiscal mismanagement, but we are up for the challenge. Make no mistake, those opposite left Queensland in a sad and sorry state with major challenges across every portfolio and in every region of Queensland. A decade of crisis and chaos will take time to fix, but we are already heading in the right direction. The Crisafulli LNP government will continue to work tirelessly to deliver the fresh start Queenslanders deserve and the fresh start that Queenslanders voted for.

I have already hit the ground running in my portfolio, showcasing the Crisafulli LNP government's plan for a fresh start for Queensland. In the trade portfolio, we have been letting our industry partners know that, under the Crisafulli LNP government, Queensland is open for business. Those on this side of the House understand the importance of restoring and strengthening our existing trade relationships as well as the need to develop new relationships. Those on this side of the House are also aware that this is not an easy task, given the damage inflicted on our trading relationships by those opposite. I am determined to ensure all of Queensland benefits from improved trade relationships which will create jobs and increase international investment in our Queensland businesses. This will only occur through strengthening bilateral trade ties and ensuring our international partners know that under a Crisafulli LNP government stability, certainty and growth in the trade space are at the forefront of our minds.

Our international trade partners need to have confidence in our state, which was a difficult ask given the damage inflicted by inconsistent decisions made under the former Labor government. With that in mind, I have already undertaken successful trade missions to Japan and South Korea, as well as Singapore and India, and an interstate trade mission as recently as last week. I am determined to repair our international trade relationships after a decade of Labor mismanagement, and the Crisafulli LNP government is excited about the opportunities ahead for all Queenslanders.

My Japan and South Korea trade mission involved 25 meetings over five days where I was able to reinforce our strong trade relationships, bolstering Queensland's vibrant trade and investment agreements, and shoring up Queensland jobs. The Singapore and India trade mission was an important opportunity to rebuild trust with our international partners and support our Queensland exporters and institutions in showcasing their wares to an eager international market, demonstrating world-class innovation in fields such as biopharmaceuticals, digital health, medical devices and advanced therapeutics. As I continue to showcase the Crisafulli LNP government's efforts to repair international trade relationships, the overwhelming feedback I am receiving from our trade partners is that they are excited to hear that Queensland is open for business.

It is not just the international trade relationships we need to restore. Domestically, the Crisafulli LNP government is determined to ensure Queensland is front and centre for new business investment opportunities. During my recent trip to Melbourne, I had the opportunity to speak with several major companies that expressed interest in doing business in Queensland. Such investment would, of course, deliver significant local job opportunities. In my role as minister, I will continue to showcase Queensland as the best place to do business in this country.

Within the employment and training portfolio, I am working to ensure the sustainability of our vocational education and training sector, including ensuring we are delivering excellence within our training organisations. It is critical that our TAFE institutes are well resourced and delivering high-quality training programs that ensure future generations of Queenslanders are equipped with the tools they need to succeed in the workforce. It is also crucial to ensure that private providers feel supported and secure enough to invest in people and capital, something which was sorely lacking under the previous Labor government. It is also why the Crisafulli LNP government has announced initiatives like our micro-credentialing training, which will see approximately 3,000 participants across 813 enterprises benefit from \$1.96 million in grants to 10 training projects delivered by the Crisafulli LNP government as part of its commitment to secure a pipeline of skilled workers. Initiatives such as these will work to ease the skill crisis left by the previous Labor government by maximising productivity and ensuring local workforces keep pace with industry requirements, addressing specific skills gaps not typically covered by traditional vocational education and training programs. I am excited to continue supporting innovative and fresh ideas to address the skills shortage in this state and, indeed, to clean up the mess left within the employment and training space by the previous Labor government.

Within the finance portfolio, alongside my colleague, the Treasurer, we are laser focused on restoring respect of the hard-earned money of every Queensland taxpayer. In stark contrast to the approach of Queensland Labor, this is a government that will be disciplined in its spending and a government that will treat taxpayers' funds with the respect it deserves.

Who can forget the stunning revelations during the Mid-Year Fiscal and Economic Review that, thanks to the reckless fiscal decisions of those opposite, government debt was forecast to hit \$218 billion by 2027-28? That is almost \$40,000 for every man, woman and child in Queensland—the worst per capita debt burden on any state in the nation. It is truly horrifying to consider just how worse things could have become if Queenslanders did not vote for a fresh start at the recent election. Thankfully, Queenslanders saw through the desperate ploys of those opposite who were determined to save their jobs, no matter the cost. Indeed, Queenslanders will not soon forget the behaviour of those opposite during their time in government and, in particular, the behaviour with the government purse strings. The member for Murrumba and the member for Woodridge seemed determined to waste hard-earned taxpayer funds, spending like it was going out of fashion, including committing to various projects without allocating the requisite funding to actually deliver them.

Those opposite managed to leave a legacy of woeful economic mismanagement, budget black holes and blowouts—hardly an inspiring approach from Queensland Labor towards the state's finances. As we work through the budget process, we have taken a calm and methodical approach with a focus on delivering on our promises to tackle Labor's youth crime, health, housing, cost-of-living and crime crises. The Crisafulli LNP government understands the importance of fiscal discipline, of responsible government expenditure and the need to deliver projects on time and on budget—all concepts which seem to escape the members for Murrumba and Woodridge and their Labor caucus friends.

When it comes to services for Queensland, I am keenly working with colleagues and fellow shareholding ministers to enhance the performance of Queensland government-owned corporations. These corporations, like many companies across Queensland, need a skilled workforce to thrive and, as the Minister for Employment and Training, it is something I am working hard to address.

Above all else, we on this side of the House understand how eager Queenslanders are for real change. After a decade of crisis and chaos under Labor, Queenslanders want a fresh start.