



Speech By
Hon. Brent Mickelberg

MEMBER FOR BUDERIM

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MAJOR SPORTS FACILITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Hon. BA MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (6.28 pm): I rise to speak to the Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. In particular, I will be directing my comments towards the amendments that have been circulated that amend the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements Act 2021 transport schedule.

If honourable members talk to any sportsperson they will be told how a crowd can impact performance. The home team advantage is a real thing: a cheering crowd can lift athletes to a higher level of performance, just like in question time here. Tokyo 2020, which was held in 2021 due to COVID, was a spectacular event, but the lack of a crowd made it feel like there was something missing. If we reflect on the train wreck that was the so-called planning for the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games under the previous Labor government, it is clear to me that the importance of having a roaring crowd in the stands was lost on them. They were in such turmoil over the location of this stadium that they ignored the importance of being able to get the crowd to the stadium. To see this, members have only to look at the member for Murrumba's fantastic idea to build a new temporary stadium at QEII. With no rail line anywhere close by, a long line of buses multiple kilometres long would have been needed to service the venue. It was never going to work. Worse than that, it would deliver no legacy benefits for Queenslanders at all.

That is why the Crisafulli government delivered our 2032 Delivery Plan. It has been so welcomed by Queenslanders right up and down the coast. We know that Queenslanders across the board are welcoming of the certainty and the vision provided by the 2032 Delivery Plan and at last the planning chaos has been replaced with a clear vision and, importantly, action. The confusion and the delay are over.

Sitting suspended from 6.30 pm to 7.30 pm.

 **Mr MICKELBERG:** If you look through the delivery plan you will see that it is not just a list of venues; it also includes important transport infrastructure that will not only facilitate the movement of crowds to and from the events for the Olympics but also deliver a transport legacy that Queenslanders will benefit from long after the athletes have left. To my mind, that is the biggest reason Queenslanders should be excited for when Brisbane and Queensland host the games in 2032.

Queensland was awarded the games in July 2021. The Olympic and Paralympic Games are usually awarded seven years in advance, but for the first time we were given a 10-year runway to prepare. It was like competing in a 100-metre sprint and getting a three-second head start. Unfortunately, under those opposite the first three years were wasted. What do we have to show for it? Nothing. In sport they call that a false start. It is so important that we get on with the job of building the necessary infrastructure, whether that is transport or venue infrastructure or the athletes villages, expeditiously. There is no time to waste and that is why these amendments are being considered tonight.

I note the critical comments of those opposite about these amendments. These amendments would not be needed if those opposite were not running the race previously in slow motion, particularly when it comes to transport infrastructure. Had they not wasted the three years when we were first awarded the games before we came to office, we would be in a better place to deliver the games. I have to ask the question: just exactly what did the member for Aspley do when he was a member of the former Labor government? I know it is not the first time he has been asked that question this week. I heard him on Steve Austin yesterday when he was asked, 'What exactly did the member for Aspley do in the former government?' Many people are asking the same question, but it is a relevant question because it was not planning for the Olympic and the Paralympic Games.

Mr Dick: Rubbish!

Mr MICKELBERG: It was not planning for the Olympic and the Paralympic Games. I hear the interjections from the former treasurer, who did not fund this and did not deliver the infrastructure needed—failed to deliver, including for his own community, I might add. He did not get work started on Logan to Gold Coast faster rail. It is an LNP government that is delivering for the member for Woodridge's community. The LNP government is delivering Logan to Gold Coast faster rail—something that those opposite should have championed, wanted to deliver but did not get on with the job.

Seriously, I want to address the attack which we heard from the member for Aspley earlier trying to throw mud and slander in a completely unparliamentary way and an unfounded and non-factual way, and I want to be very clear: these amendments are about fast-tracking delivery of infrastructure that is needed to support the games. Whether that is transport infrastructure, whether that is games venues or athletes villages, that is what these amendments do. I might add that these amendments only add these projects into a schedule for the legislation which was debated last year which those opposite had plenty of time to consider, but they want to come in here and they want to throw mud because that is all they have. They cannot stand on their record. They would rather come in here and throw mud because they know they do not have a record to stand on, but we will deliver a successful games in 2032 and we will deliver the infrastructure required.

I want to take this opportunity to talk about some of the projects that are included in the amendments that have been circulated. We all recall the commitment that Labor made regarding heavy rail to the Sunshine Coast—Beerwah to Caloundra by 2015 and to Maroochydore by 2020. That is Labor's promise—to Caloundra by 2015 and Maroochydore by 2020. 2015 came and 2015 went—no rail line, no work. Then 2020 came and 2020 went—still no rail line. Finally, after the LNP had committed to it before the last election, Labor decided that it might be time to have a think about it, but only to Caloundra. It wanted to turn Caloundra into a car park. That was Labor's plan.

The new member for Caloundra knew that turning Caloundra into a car park was not a great plan. She listened to her community. She could see that it was a half-baked idea and, thankfully, her community supported her and now we have an energetic, hardworking local member for Caloundra delivering the Wave all the way through to the Sunshine Coast Airport. I ask members to note that this amendment does not just include rail to Caloundra, or the Wave stage 1 as it is known; it also includes the Wave stage 2 and stage 3 all the way to Maroochydore and on to the Sunshine Coast Airport—something that Labor did not even think of delivering. Labor has never spoken about going all the way to the airport. We can only focus on its failure to get to Caloundra and to Maroochydore. Every Sunshine Coast local knows it, and it is its failure nonetheless. In contrast, our government has hit the ground running. We are building the Wave all the way to Maroochydore and the Sunshine Coast Airport.

As they say in the classics, there is more. The Mooloolah River Interchange was abandoned by the federal Labor Party—abandoned by the federal government after funding was withdrawn. In fact, one of the first actions of the member for Aspley as the transport minister was to roll over on the Mooloolah River Interchange. He said, 'Oh, well,' and did not put up a fight. It was a bit like when they cut funding for the Bruce Highway—said it was going to be fifty-fifty, gave up on 80-20. Those opposite cannot stand up to the CFMEU and they will not stand up to their Labor mates in Canberra, and it is Queenslanders who pay the price. By contrast, our Crisafulli LNP government will build the Mooloolah River Interchange—the same Mooloolah River Interchange that those opposite gave up on—and work has already started. Work has already started.

Further north we are also upgrading the Cairns Western Arterial Road—and, boy, haven't we seen an own goal this week from the member for Cairns when it comes to the Cairns Western Arterial Road? He was on the news last night lamenting that that project was sent back to the drawing board. It was disclosed to him by the federal Labor government—shock, horror! If there was ever an example of how a little bit of information was a dangerous thing, this is it. The project was sent back to the drawing board. He is correct: it was sent back to the drawing board by federal Labor, but the emphasis there is on 'was': it was sent back to the drawing board in 2023 under the former Labor government.

Has the member for Cairns been hiding under a rock for all of those years? He was in cabinet, mind you. Remember, he was in cabinet. Maybe he was just too busy posting on social media. Maybe the member for Cairns should instead be getting up in this chamber and apologising to the people of Cairns for accidentally forgetting to point out to the media that it was his government that mucked up and failed the planning for that critical project, that it was the abject project mismanagement of the former Labor state government that resulted in its federal Labor mates losing confidence and its ability to deliver the project. So we have added the Cairns Western Arterial Road into the list of projects that Labor could never deliver but our side will.

The Olympic and Paralympic Games will be a great opportunity to showcase Queensland to the world, and I think there is no better example of this than sailing in the Whitsundays—and sailing in Townsville as well, for that matter. Labor wanted the games to be a South-East Queensland party alone, but I can tell members one person who wanted these games to be for all of Queensland, and that is the member for Whitsunday. She has been fighting for her community, and we think that sailing in the Whitsundays is a great idea for the 2032 Olympics, but we need the facilities to match. That is why our government supports upgrades to the Shute Harbour boating facilities, and that is why they are contained in these amendments as well.

Finally, let us have a look at the Coomera Connector. We are getting on with the job of progressing stage 2 of this project and I can tell you categorically, Mr Deputy Speaker Lister, that stage 2 is going to be different from stage 1. We are not going to let the project costs double as they did under stage 1 by those weak, incompetent Labor ministers. We will do the proper planning. We will not be beholden to union masters like the CFMEU. The BPIC CFMEU tax will not apply to the Coomera Connector stage 2. We will deliver it on time and on budget. We have a plan to deliver the Olympic and Paralympic Games for all Queenslanders. Whether that is the venues or whether that is the transport infrastructure, our government is getting on with the job. I commend the bill to the House.