



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PROOF

MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Infrastructure

SPEECH

Wednesday, 15 February 2017

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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<p>Date Wednesday, 15 February 2017 Page 72 Questioner Speaker O'Brien, Ted, MP</p>	<p>Source House Proof Yes Responder Question No.</p>
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Mr TED O'BRIEN (Fairfax) (16:14): I was thinking, as I was listening to the last honourable member's speech, of that great classic movie *Wag the Dog*.

Mr Keogh interjecting—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Coulton): The member for Burt will remove himself for one hour under 94(a). He had been warned.

The member for Burt then left the chamber.

Mr TED O'BRIEN: In *Wag the Dog*, you might remember the comment being made that every good campaign deserves a good song. I do not know whether today is, in fact, the campaign efforts of the member for Grayndler—the people's choice to knock off the Leader of the Opposition—or it is just the WA Labor team, who are here today not to talk about a topic specific to WA but are here in force. We only have one member over here in the House, and he is already worth 10 times that of the members opposite. You see, those who wish to have a Labor Party running WA need only look at my state of Queensland, as Labor in Queensland are as daft as Labor in WA in this unbelievable pixies-from-the-garden vision of a 50 per cent renewable target.

I have to say, as much as I think the Labor Party in Queensland are ludicrous in this regard, in WA they are even more foolish, especially when you consider the relative isolation of the West from the grid. But here we are again. Every good campaign deserves a song, and the only song I could think of when listening to the last couple of speakers is that classic Bee Gees song—remember that? It says—and I cannot sing—'It's only words, and words are all I have to take your heart away.' That is all it is from the Labor Party; it is just words. Nothing more. No delivery; absolutely zip.

The member for Grayndler, and it could be part of his campaign to take the leadership of the Labor Party, loves to beat the chest and talk about how every piece of infrastructure in this country was done under his leadership. Being a good Queenslander and a very proud citizen of the Sunshine Coast, I will give us a look at that track record in the context of the seat of Fairfax and the Sunshine Coast. The member for Grayndler, in his opening remarks, tried to suggest that the government had cut funding to the Bruce Highway in Queensland. That was what he said. When he was at the last election—actually, no, it was in 2013—what he and Labor committed to the Bruce Highway in Queensland was \$4.1 billion. The coalition committed \$6.7 billion. At the end of the day there is only one party that is delivering on the Bruce Highway, and that is the coalition.

In my patch alone on the Sunshine Coast we will see construction beginning this year on a \$929 million spend on the Bruce Highway from north of the Caloundra Road turnoff to the Sunshine Motorway. Go up another seven kilometres and \$187 million is being brought forward to be spent on the Maroochydore interchange. That is already over \$1 billion. What is interesting about the member for Grayndler is that he is complaining about a cut. That first project I mentioned, the \$929 million to be spent just north of the Caloundra Road turnoff and six-laning, is costing us \$929 million instead of \$1.1 billion—for better quality, faster delivery and cheaper delivery. It is only the Labor Party that starts complaining when less government money is needed to deliver a better job.

But let's go away from roads and highways; let's look at the airport. The Sunshine Coast international airport announced their new private partner only last week, and we are very excited about this. What did Labor do for that project? Nothing. What has the coalition done? Delivered a \$181 million concessional loan so that the airport can be upgraded. Of course, in my beautiful electorate I also have a hinterland. There are lots of black spots—three, possibly four—and we already have investments in mobile towers for three of those. How much did Labor give to mobile black spots? Zero. Not a cent. It is only words. That is all they have to take the hearts away, but the problem is that the Australian public are too smart to buy into that. They want to see outcomes and they want to see delivery, and I can tell you that, from my point of view, for the Bruce Highway, the airport and communications, it is the coalition that will do that.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The time for the discussion has concluded.