



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PROOF

Federation Chamber

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

City Deals

SPEECH

Monday, 5 February 2018

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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<p>Date Monday, 5 February 2018 Page 151 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) (11:53): I'm delighted that the parliament has begun for 2018. Already the Labor Party is claiming Bill Shorten is Elvis Presley, if you were to take it from the former Speaker and this ludicrous claim that the coalition government is only talking and not acting on infrastructure. To put that to rest, take just my part of the world, the Sunshine Coast. There is over \$920 million of construction currently underway on the Bruce Highway north of Caloundra Road. There is \$187 million currently under business case—money already allocated—for the Maroochy interchange. There is a \$181 million concessional loan for an upgrade of the Sunshine Coast Airport and a quarter of a million dollars for a full feasibility study to bring an optic cable onto the Sunshine Coast. This is real money, real delivery, real infrastructure. That is precisely what the Turnbull government continues to deliver.

But we're here today in support of a motion put by my colleague the member for Fisher in relation to City Deals. Now, as my colleague laid out very articulately, how often do we as parliamentarians hear people bemoan the fact that the three tiers of government often don't work together? How often do we hear people talk about the need for greater vision and long-term thinking? I've been hearing that all my life. People are crying out for governments to have vision, for tiers of government to work together and for the private sector and the community to engage with government in the delivery of those visions.

In comes the Turnbull coalition government and its Smart Cities framework, and it is precisely that aim which this framework delivers on. It does so with three pillars: one being smart investment; another, smart technology; and, lastly, smart policy. With smart investment you see, through the Smart Cities Plan framework, encouragement for us to leverage our balance sheet and pursue innovative financing options, including value capture. With smart technology you see the need for us to use data, particularly what's referred to as 'big data', and the need for us to have greater technological solutions. With smart policy you see ideas such as the city plan, or, as we otherwise refer to it, City Deals.

Already the Turnbull government has delivered in this regard, with deals done for Townsville and Launceston; Western Sydney is underway; and MOUs were signed recently for Geelong and Hobart. You see, what we have reflected in the City Deals process is the opportunity not just for those three tiers of government to work together but also to unlock more capital from the private sector. We have the opportunity to actually have capital cities or regions establish a very set vision for what their future is and then pull on every lever possible to deliver on that vision. You see a consultative approach which means the community is carried along with its leaders. This is precisely what the City Deals process delivers.

I would also make the point that, true to this coalition government's DNA, City Deals are being considered not just for capital cities but also for regional areas. That is why I also support the member for Fisher's interest in the Sunshine Coast as a potential area for a City Deal—an area that I believe can be the healthiest place on earth; a simple vision. But we are a region, like many across Australia, that does struggle with high population growth—and, of course, one of our pain points is in fact a lack of housing affordability. In fact, the least affordable place in Australia happens to be my region. Now, how we solve some of these bigger problems is a conundrum that not one tier of government can deal with; you require all three to work together. You require the private sector. You require the community. That is precisely what the City Deal construct delivers on, and it's why I stand here today in support.