

Queensland Parliament Hansard Green

DATE: 19/04/2016

FILE: 19042016_000988_LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY_GREEN CHAMBER.DOCX

SUBJECT: State Infrastructure Plan

MEMBER: Mr PEGG

State Infrastructure Plan

 **Mr PEGG** (Stretton—ALP) (12.22 pm): It is my great pleasure to congratulate the Deputy Premier on the release of the State Infrastructure Plan, which was released 13 March. This plan lays out a new and groundbreaking strategic direction for the planning, investment and delivery of infrastructure in Queensland. It supports a capital spend across Queensland of over \$35 billion over four years and includes the establishment of a new State Infrastructure Fund with an injection of \$500 million to build the infrastructure needed to grow the economy and support jobs for Queenslanders. The Palaszczuk government has achieved all of this while maintaining operating surpluses across the forward estimates, projected levels of state growth of four per cent this financial year and 4.5 per cent next year and creating lots of new jobs in the process. There have been 50,000 new jobs since January 2015 alone.

Unfortunately, this remarkable plan—the most complete whole-of-government infrastructure plan the state has ever seen—has predictably been criticised by the LNP, which is a party that achieved nothing of merit during their brief, but eventful, tenure that ended just over one year ago. Before I go on I want to pose this question: who do members think is the biggest critic of the State Infrastructure Plan in this House? Are there any ideas? Yes, you guessed it. Yet again it is the architect of austerity, the member for Clayfield, who, as well as being the former Treasurer, is the current opposition infrastructure spokesman. In his criticism of the plan, the member for Clayfield has claimed that it is recycled and that there is nothing new in it, despite the fact that \$300 million has been committed to high-priority projects such as key upgrades to the Ipswich, Pacific and Gateway motorways. When the plan was released the member for Clayfield also said, 'The government does not have a plan for infrastructure: it has a wish list.' This is despite a firm commitment from this government of over \$35 billion for infrastructure over the forward estimates. It is not a wish list, but a fully funded plan to deliver on key infrastructure projects.

In contrast, let us see what the member for Clayfield did to support infrastructure in Queensland while he was the Treasurer. I think the House will find this very interesting indeed. As everyone knows, in 2012 the former Treasurer handed down the most ruthless budget in Queensland's industry, and I have spoken about that at length before. As well as sacking 14,000 workers and raising taxes to the tune of \$600 million, his response to building the essential infrastructure Queenslanders need was to cut the capital program by \$1.4 billion over the first two years.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr PEGG: The considered response of the member for Clayfield and the LNP was to cut the guts out of critical infrastructure funding which had already been approved and planned in the 2011-12 state budget. It did not stop there. As the member for Lockyer would know, the next year in the 2013-14 state budget the member for Clayfield was at it again, further reducing general government capital purchases by almost \$500 million when compared to the year before. Despite these cuts, general government borrowing still increased by around \$3.5 billion over the same period. Given that these draconian and counterproductive cuts did nothing to reduce debt or stimulate growth, can anyone guess what the former Treasurer did to support the capital program the third time he had an opportunity in the 2014-15 state budget? You guessed it. The member for Clayfield was at it again, further cutting capital purchases by almost \$700 million from 2013-14 to 2014-15; however, this time there is a sweetener of sorts or a bitter pill, if you prefer. The LNP would be prepared to consider additional infrastructure funding of \$8.6 billion, but only based on the approval of the liquidation of \$37 billion of highly profitable state assets. Unfortunately, no considered infrastructure plan was presented to demonstrate how this \$8.6 billion would be best spent. There was no detailed evidence-based process—

Mr Rickuss: Who sold assets again?

Mr PEGG: —for prioritising key infrastructure projects, but instead we were presented with wild and irresponsible pork-barrelling election commitments. Where is the LNP's proposed state infrastructure plan today?

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! The member for Lockyer has already been warned under standing order 253A. I ask you to withdraw from the chamber for the remainder of this morning's session.

Whereupon the honourable member for Lockyer withdrew from the chamber at 12.26 pm.

Mr PEGG: As I was saying, where is the LNP's proposed state infrastructure plan? When will the member for Clayfield table this alternative vision for Queensland to the parliament? No LNP infrastructure plan has been tabled because the LNP does not have a plan except to cut, cut, cut if they were to return to power. That is always their solution to everything.

In conclusion I say to the opposition that, rather than criticising us for no reason, accept the hopeless failures of your own administration. Learn from the government's economic successes over the last 12 months and work constructively with us to build a better Queensland. As I have said before, you cannot just cut your way to prosperity. You have to have a plan to stimulate the economy and go for growth so that everyone can share in the economic benefits and—

(Time expired)