




Speech By  
**Dr Christian Rowan**

**MEMBER FOR MOGGILL**

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Record of Proceedings, 26 November 2020

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY**

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (3.42 pm): I begin by acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land on which we are meeting and pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging. Mr Deputy Speaker, I also congratulate you on your appointment to high office. It is indeed a great privilege and honour to continue to serve as the state member for Moggill in the 57th Queensland Parliament. I wish to formally place on record my thanks and sincere appreciation to the residents and constituents of the electorate of Moggill for their ongoing trust and support in re-electing me to be their representative in the 57th Parliament.

I also wish to acknowledge and thank my wife, Jane, as well as Nicholas, Charley, Angus and Lucie for their support and words of encouragement. I specifically acknowledge my mother-in-law, Wendy Nelson. On 10 July this year, my father-in-law, Parker Nelson, suffered a midbrain stem stroke, with a secondary fractured skull and subarachnoid haemorrhage as a result of a subsequent fall. The following 18 weeks were incredibly difficult and challenging as Parker initially survived a prolonged course in the Royal Brisbane Hospital's intensive care unit, followed by a subsequent lengthy admission to the stroke unit and rehabilitation ward. It was an incredible shock given that he was only 75 years old and had always been fit, strong and healthy and had always enjoyed an active lifestyle. Unfortunately, Parker died on 14 November 2020 and his funeral was held this week on Tuesday, 24 November 2020. Wendy's and Parker's daughters, Jane, Sally and Caroline, have all endured an incredibly difficult time, even more so—as all elected representatives would appreciate—given the stress that a Queensland state election campaign can place on families. Parker Robert Nelson was a devoted husband, dedicated father and distinguished civil engineer. He was a stalwart of the Chapel Hill community. He will be missed immensely by all of his family, friends and many in our local community. Vale, Parker Robert Nelson.

I take this opportunity to recognise the service of former Liberal National Party opposition leader, Deb Frecklington, the member for Nanango, and former LNP deputy opposition leader, Tim Mander, the member for Everton, during the 56th Queensland Parliament. I congratulate David Crisafulli, the member for Broadwater, on his ascendancy to the position of Liberal National Party leader, as well as David Janetzki, the member for Toowoomba South, on his appointment to the position of deputy leader of the LNP opposition.

During my previous term as the state member for Moggill, it was a pleasure and privilege to support local residents and constituents with a range of important matters. I also very much appreciated the opportunity to enhance our local community, not-for-profit and sporting organisations. This included securing additional government funding for such organisations. This year, providing ongoing significant health and economic advice and support as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic has been challenging but incredibly necessary to ensure that local residents were and continue to be well supported.

During the 56th Parliament it was an absolute honour to serve as the shadow minister for communities, the shadow minister for disability services and seniors, and the shadow minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships as well as the shadow minister for the arts. In

particular, it was terrific to be able to work in collaboration with the office of the Hon. Ken Wyatt, the federal Minister for Indigenous Australians, on the federal Morrison coalition LNP government's reformed 16 national Close the Gap targets and other public policy pertaining to improved social, economic, health, educational and employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. Being able to achieve bipartisan parliamentary support for the Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Bill is something that I was enormously proud of as shadow minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, given the cultural significance of that reform for Torres Strait Islander communities. As the LNP's shadow minister for disability services, I was also proud to support the disability sector in its quest for the extension of Queensland's Taxi Subsidy Scheme.

I now want to turn to the next four years. There remains a myriad of local infrastructure needs in the electorate of Moggill and across the western suburbs of Brisbane that existed prior to COVID-19 and infrastructure requirements that have had no practical action taken to date by the Palaszczuk state Labor government. I have again written to various reappointed Palaszczuk state Labor government ministers about the Palaszczuk state Labor government's inertia and lack of action over the past five years and how Labor cannot afford to allow policy and funding paralysis to continue for another four years. I have also written correspondence to the Palaszczuk state Labor government about these issues over the past five years, in addition to my advocacy via the Queensland parliament on these matters.

There are a number of main roads and public transport concerns held by residents in the electorate of Moggill. At the core of local residents' concerns is the failure of successive state Labor governments to properly address legacy issues, particularly with regards to adequate traffic planning and the provision of public and active transport services. Since I was first elected in 2015 as the Liberal National Party's state member for Moggill, I have consistently advocated for an integrated road and public transport plan for the electorate of Moggill and more broadly across the western suburbs of Brisbane. In order to bust traffic congestion and enhance public transport, it is essential that all levels of government work in collaboration, whilst also embarking on adequate consultation with the broader community so that the road and public and active transport needs of local residents can be met, both now and well into the future.

With specific reference to the electorate of Moggill, a range of solutions are required to properly address Moggill Road, which is the main state controlled arterial road, so that it may be utilised both as efficiently and as safely as possible by motorists, public transport users, cyclists and pedestrians. Following decades of inaction by successive state governments to sufficiently address growing traffic congestion on Moggill Road and additional impacts on nearby local roads and other arterials, this state controlled road continues to suffer with significant and problematic traffic flow issues. Solutions are urgently required and they must be adequately funded and implemented so as to eliminate traffic congestion on Moggill Road.

It is unfortunate that, despite the federal Morrison coalition LNP government's contribution of \$12.5 million and the subsequent Palaszczuk state Labor government's commitment to match that funding for the upgrade of the Kenmore roundabout, there appears to be continued inertia by the Labor government on getting the project going. There is still a considerable lack of information and community consultation on that project by the Palaszczuk state Labor government. On behalf of local constituents I wish to convey that residents and local businesses are eager to understand more about the planning and scope of the project and wish to be fully consulted on any plans by the Palaszczuk state Labor government. With no official update having been provided, I respectfully ask for a formal briefing on the progress of the Kenmore roundabout upgrade project, including the proposed community engagement, project timelines and process of consultation with key stakeholders, including affected local businesses such as the Kenmore Village Shopping Centre.

Another key concern for residents in the electorate of Moggill has been the need for greater public transport availability and connectivity through the western suburbs of Brisbane. I wish to again reiterate my previous advocacy to the Palaszczuk state Labor government in relation to revisiting public transport bus routes and timetabling. This is necessary in order to better service the evolving demographics of our local area as well as the continued and projected increase in our residential population. This is most pertinent to the suburbs of Anstead, Karana Downs, Mount Crosby and Lake Manchester. In particular, Labor continues to deny public transport to the residents of Karana Downs and Mount Crosby. Greater consideration must also be given by the Palaszczuk state Labor government to the scheduling, quality and frequency of services provided by SeaLink ferries, who are subcontracted by the Palaszczuk state Labor government to operate the Moggill Ferry.

In addition to the provision of sufficient public transport services for local constituents, I believe it is also highly incumbent on the re-elected Palaszczuk state Labor government to ensure the sufficient and safe provision and maintenance of pedestrian and cycle paths, particularly in suburbs that continue

to see residential growth and increased road patronage. I respectfully ask that the Palaszczuk state Labor government work constructively and collaboratively with the Brisbane City Council to provide additional and enhanced pedestrian access along state controlled roads in the Moggill electorate. With community consultation undertaken by the Brisbane City Council finding that local residents did not support Brisbane City Council's proposed green bridge for Bellbowrie, the Palaszczuk state Labor government also needs to work with the Brisbane City Council on the feasibility of a multi-use bridge, including for cars, buses, pedestrians and cyclists at Bellbowrie.

I would like to take this opportunity to also once again convey that a considerable level of feedback I receive as the local state member for Moggill is for ongoing maintenance and vegetation requests, including the eradication of branches, weeds and other non-road works on state controlled roads. I have been consistently advised by the government that such requests are only attended to on an ad hoc or limited basis, due to funding and/or other priorities. It would be to the benefit of local residents if there was an increase in the frequency of the maintenance schedule so as to sufficiently address excess vegetation and weed-clearing concerns.

As the Palaszczuk state Labor government commences its third term, I understand that additional forward planning and scoping of Queensland state controlled road networks will continue. I wish to reaffirm my formal feedback that was provided to the Department of Transport and Main Roads' South East Queensland Regional Transport Plan. Specifically, I wish to state that, given the medium- to long-term nature of this plan, it will potentially require the examination of South-East Queensland's gazetted transport corridors held by the state of Queensland and the Department of Transport and Main Roads. Any current or future effort by the Palaszczuk state Labor government to assess, develop, plan or scope such corridors must be undertaken with full community consultation and not simply rely on plans, designs or otherwise that have been previously developed and will likely be decades old if revisited.

I now wish to address the Palaszczuk state Labor government's plans to address local school and educational requirements. It is imperative that the Palaszczuk state Labor government work to urgently address the infrastructure needs of local schools, in particular Kenmore State High School, so that students, teachers and staff can be afforded the resources and facilities they rightly deserve. Kenmore State High School needs a new school hall which adequately provides for the modern needs of students learning in the 21st century and which can sufficiently cater to and accommodate the entire Kenmore State High School student cohort. Library facilities at Kenmore State High School are also in desperate need of an infrastructure upgrade. Consideration must be given by the Palaszczuk state Labor government to enabling the revitalisation and/or redevelopment of Kenmore State High School's J block. It is evident that, whilst growth has continued to occur in the numbers of both parents and students at Kenmore State High School, the purpose-built environments provided at Kenmore State High School have failed to match this growth, including Kenmore State High School's need for a dedicated sports centre, a performing arts auditorium and a student services and administration hub that can incorporate an upgraded school library. The Palaszczuk state Labor government's capital works program needs to include Kenmore State High School.

Whilst the infrastructure at Kenmore State High School must be a priority, it is also essential that the Palaszczuk state Labor government commit to and build a new high school for the western suburbs of Brisbane. Specifically, the Labor government must build a new high school that can service the families and residents of the suburbs of Moggill, Bellbowrie, Anstead, Mount Crosby, Karana Downs and Lake Manchester as well as other surrounding suburbs including Chuwar and Karalee.

In July of this year the Palaszczuk state Labor government announced that a new primary school will be built at an undisclosed location within the western suburbs of Brisbane, potentially in the electorate of Moggill. Whilst this new primary school infrastructure is to be welcomed, it is again important to understand the impacts that this will potentially place on existing local high school enrolments and existing local school infrastructure.

In addition to ensuring the adequate provision and maintenance of local high school educational infrastructure and resources, I wish to again reiterate my previous advocacy to ensure that the school strategic infrastructure plans of all state primary schools within the electorate of Moggill are properly funded and implemented. This is equally applicable to the nine new schools the Palaszczuk Labor government intends to build over the next four years.

Seven of the nine state schools within the electorate of Moggill are independent public schools. This model has been successfully adopted and implemented by these schools, with parents, teachers and staff overwhelmingly endorsing the independent public schools model and the greater autonomy it has provided. On behalf of these schools and their broader school communities, I wish to convey my strong support for the continuation of the independent public schools model and the associated additional funding that is granted by this program. It is unfortunate that there has been uncertainty as

to whether the Palaszczuk state Labor government will continue this highly successful model. That is why, for the benefit of local IPS schools, the Palaszczuk state Labor government must commit publicly to preserving and indeed expanding this model.

I would also like to take this opportunity to again stress the urgent need to address the safety of students travelling to and from Brookfield State School, with students often crossing Brookfield Road. Whilst this road is under the jurisdictional control of Brisbane City Council, collaboration with various state departments under the control of the Palaszczuk state Labor government may assist with a satisfactory resolution.

On community and social infrastructure for local community groups and not-for-profit organisations in the electorate of Moggill and the western suburbs of Brisbane, it is important that the Labor government work to address the need for a dedicated community and neighbourhood centre, locally referred to as a western community hub, to ensure that the work and meeting requirements for multiple community groups can be met via a modern facility that is appropriately resourced. Currently, work is continuing to be progressed by the Brisbane City Council on a proposed upgrade and redevelopment of its community facilities at 98 Brookfield Road, Kenmore Hills. Such work has only been made possible through dedicated funding via the federal Morrison coalition LNP government. Whilst work is progressing to ensure this upgrade can meet the needs of our local community, there remain concerns by certain community groups regarding the potential to adequately cater for the varying needs of many diverse organisations. Therefore, I respectfully request again that the Palaszczuk state Labor government work collaboratively with both the Brisbane City Council and local community stakeholders to ensure that a suitable, modern facility can be provided to service the needs of community organisations in the western suburbs of Brisbane. This should entail the provision of sufficient state government funding and, if necessary, the identification of a suitable location in addition to the 98 Brookfield Road site. I am also of the understanding that Brisbane City Council will be considering its own allocation of specific funding to such projects.

During the recent state election campaign, local community groups were told that the Palaszczuk state Labor government is prepared to commit the financial resources, infrastructure and potentially land and property to facilitate a new community centre for the western suburbs of Brisbane. I respectfully request that, through appropriate communication and consultation with relevant local stakeholders, including myself as the local state member for Moggill, the Palaszczuk state Labor government now proceeds to commit the necessary funds, in collaboration with other levels of government, in order to deliver such a facility.

I am looking forward to the opportunities and challenges ahead, particularly given my recent appointment as the shadow minister for education and also as the continuing shadow minister for the arts. I will continue to champion the development and implementation of sound, evidence based policy. I believe in fostering an educational system which recognises that both personal fulfilment and social responsibility are compatible and that the pursuit of excellence is not in conflict with equal opportunity for all. I also understand the importance of financially sustainable and accessible education and health systems in both the public and private sectors and the importance of open, transparent and accountable performance measurement processes.

I note that the Palaszczuk state Labor government has established a dedicated Minister for Rural Communities and that the Liberal National Party opposition has appointed a dedicated shadow minister for rural and regional affairs.

I would like to take this opportunity to highlight a very important educational program and, consequently, what has been able to be achieved via sustained professional leadership and government commitment, in this case via a number of federal coalition LNP governments in collaboration with the state government here in Queensland. The Remote Vocational Training Scheme was established in 1999 as a joint initiative of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, RACGP, and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine, ACRRM. Its established purpose is to provide vocational training to medical practitioners in remote parts of Queensland and Australia, thereby ensuring both the highest standards of clinical care and the attainment of college fellowship by distance education while also maintaining much needed medical services in specified communities.

The initial pilot was an outstanding success. Since its inception, there are now well over 400 doctors from more than 300 remote, rural and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Queensland and Australia that have been the beneficiaries of this scheme.

The Remote Vocational Training Scheme is now an integral component of medical workforce training in Australia. It has certainly delivered for many Queensland communities, including Mungindi, Biggenden, Augathella, Alpha, and Dysart, to name just a few. The Chief Executive Officer of the

Remote Vocational Training Scheme, Dr Pat Giddings OAM, former RVTS board chair, Dr Tom Doolan, Dr Jacki Mein, Jeanette McLaren, Dr Vlad Matic, Dr Mike Eaton, Dr Murray Towne, Dr Les Woollard and many others are to be congratulated on their efforts over many years.

This program has certainly contributed to closing the gap in Queensland and right across Australia. I would encourage the government in its upcoming budget to again look at the rural generalist pathway in Queensland and the benefits it has delivered for rural and remote communities, not only in improving clinical outcomes but the education it has provided, some of the public health benefits and the community programs that have been implemented.

I conclude my contribution today by acknowledging and thanking the many people who assisted me during the most recent Queensland state election campaign. In particular, I would like to acknowledge my staff, and the many LNP volunteers, supporters and members who have provided invaluable assistance throughout this year, given its many challenges. My thanks and appreciation must go to: LNP Moggill electorate campaign chair, Leigh Warren, and her husband, Chris; Daniel Downes; Thomas Cunningham; Annabel Freemantle; Amanda Strachan; Moggill state electorate council chair, Paul McMonagle; SEC executive members, including Treasurer, Aenghas Hopkinson-Pearson; federal member for Ryan, Julian Simmonds MP; Alyson Richards; Bec Docherty; Councillor Greg Adermann of the Brisbane City Council Pullenvale Ward; local LNP branch chairs; booth captains; booth workers; local LNP members; volunteers; and scrutineers. I certainly could have not retained my seat of Moggill without all of the hard work and assistance that many people provided over many hours and particularly given the challenges we have seen this year.

I look forward to the challenges and opportunities of the 57th Parliament as the Liberal National Party's shadow minister for education and shadow minister for the arts as well as the opportunity to continue to represent my local area and its constituents as the state member for Moggill. I am looking forward to the budget being delivered next week. I would encourage the Palaszczuk state Labor government to urgently fund the infrastructure that is needed in the western suburbs—transport and main roads infrastructure, school infrastructure and infrastructure for a community hub. These are certainly things that have been needed for a long time. Local residents are certainly looking for that commitment via the state government. It is time that the state government acted. It is time that the state government came forward with those financial resources and allocated those to the electorate of Moggill and right across the western suburbs of Brisbane.