



Speech by

# RACHEL NOLAN

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

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## IPSWICH MOTORWAY

**Ms NOLAN** (Ipswich—ALP) (7.00 p.m.): The economic development of Ipswich has stalled on the Ipswich Motorway. As I said in my maiden speech a year and a half ago, the Ipswich Motorway is congested, ugly, potholed and dangerous. The road is used by 80,000 vehicles every day and forms part of the major freight route between Brisbane and Sydney. Its two lanes in each direction are hopelessly inadequate. The smallest accident blocks it for hours and commuters never know when the standard 45-minute journey is going to turn into an hour-long nightmare.

Since I made that maiden speech, the state government has developed a comprehensive plan for the upgrade. We have consulted thousands of people and designed a six-lane road that removes the dangerous right-hand merges at the Logan Motorway intersection, establishes service roads that link the local suburbs, and cuts the multitude of entrances and exits that slow and disrupt the traffic. Community support for the project is overwhelming. But the Howard government has committed to \$66 million for the project—around one-tenth of the dollars that are desperately needed.

As part of the National Highway, the Ipswich Motorway is a federal responsibility, but since planning finished the Howard government's disinterest in the road has been replaced by a sneaky campaign to divert public attention from the desperate need for the money. The Liberal member for Blair, Cameron Thompson, has been running around claiming that we need an alternative northern route that goes somewhere through Karalee, crosses the Brisbane River at Moggill twice and presumably hooks back on to the existing motorway route around Wolston Park. He has been backed by his mate, the Liberal member for Moreton, Gary Hardgrave.

The campaign seems bizarre until we see that it is simply a diversion. It was the Howard government, through Transport Minister John Anderson, that agreed in writing to the upgrade following the existing route. But now that the plans are ready and the federal government does not have the money, they are stalling for time. If Cameron Thompson is serious about another route, he needs to tell us why the federal government, which has agreed in writing to planning for a road along the existing route, suddenly changed its mind. He needs to tell us exactly where his alternative route goes and whose house it is going to go through. He needs to tell us when his mob are going to come up with the money.

In recent years the Beattie government, backed by the Ipswich City Council, has done a huge amount of work to restructure the Ipswich economy and to set us up for industrial and tourism based growth in the future. With the Ipswich Motorway reduced to a car park, that growth will be completely choked. The people of Ipswich need that motorway fixed, and we cannot let ourselves be deceived by a campaign of diversion from the Howard government and its local lackeys.

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