

PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

831. Ms J.J. SHAW to the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's efforts in keeping the WA economy safe and strong through its record investment in major transport infrastructure.

- (1) Can the minister update the house on the construction underway to deliver the Metronet Morley–Ellenbrook line?
- (2) Can the minister outline to the house how this, along with the Tonkin gap project, supports local businesses and creates more local jobs?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:

I thank the member for Swan Hills for her question and her support for this very significant project.

- (1)–(2) Yesterday, I joined the Premier and the members for Morley and Maylands as construction started on the Tonkin gap project. This project has two parts: facilitating works for the Morley–Ellenbrook rail line and the widening of Tonkin Highway and construction of new bridges to reduce congestion and address one of the top bottlenecks in the metropolitan area, Tonkin Highway through Bayswater. As I said, groundworks are now underway. Yesterday, we did the first concrete pour.

Mr D.J. Kelly: Is it terrazzo?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I am slightly stereotyped by racism, but I will let that wash off and talk about the fact that we were in the median strip of Tonkin Highway while concrete was being poured. Workers were happy to be working on the Morley–Ellenbrook project. It is a major achievement.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members on my left, I did not hear anything funny then. I do not know what you were laughing at.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The Morley–Ellenbrook rail line is a major commitment that we made. Of course, the Liberal Party lied to the people of Western Australia about that project not once, but twice. It is probably worthwhile going through some of the top quotes from the Liberal Party about this project since 2017. In May 2017, the Leader of the Opposition said that the Ellenbrook railway line would not be funded by Infrastructure Australia and that the project did not stack up. In 2018, she also said —

... it is likely that an independent panel of experts would have a look at the rail line to Ellenbrook and say, “Actually we don’t need that until 2031 ...

In 2018, the member for Bateman said —

But I can tell members now that the Ellenbrook line does not add up.

The member for Riverton said, “I have said do not commit funding to Ellenbrook.”

Mr D.C. Nalder interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Bateman, I call you to order for the second time.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member for Riverton said that it would take a genius to come up with a business case to support that.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: There we were yesterday with workers on site pouring concrete to support the bridge structures for the Ellenbrook rail line. I got feedback at the two construction industry dinners that I have been to over the past couple of weeks. I do not know where the Liberal Party was. A lot of companies out there are getting work and supporting thousands of jobs across Western Australia. They say, “Thank you for giving us secure jobs in Western Australia and a pipeline of work.” They are out there delivering. There is a record amount of infrastructure. That is the feedback that we get wherever we go.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse, I call you to order for the first time.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: During the estimates hearing, the member for Vasse asked what is the estimated total cost of these projects. I said that it is in the asset investment program in budget paper No 2. She said no and asked me to provide it as supplementary information. I said, “Member for Vasse, pick up the budget papers; it is there.” She said no and asked me to provide it by way of supplementary information. She did not understand that the cost of the projects is in budget paper No 2. She did not understand that it is on the asset investment page. She kept referring to a summary page in budget paper No 3. It was one of the worst performances I have ever seen.

Ms L. Mettam: Bring the mirror in.

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse, I call you to order for the second time.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: They are nasty, nasty comments. During estimates, she did not know where to find Metronet in the budget papers. It was the worst and most embarrassing performance I have ever seen. As I said during estimates, I am happy to answer questions from the opposition, but I am not going to run a budget workshop during estimates just so they can learn how to ask a question.