



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Federation Chamber

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Bradfield Electorate: Transport Infrastructure

SPEECH

Thursday, 20 March 2014

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Questioner
Speaker Fletcher, Paul, MP

Source House
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Responder
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Mr FLETCHER (Bradfield—Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Communications) (09:45): Last Sunday's announcement by motorway company Transurban Group that it has chosen Lend Lease and Bouygues as the construction partners for NorthConnex, the critical missing link infrastructure which will link the M1—formerly known as the F3—and the M2 is good news for my constituents in Bradfield. This is yet another tangible step forward on this important project, following the commitment of \$405 million made by the Abbott government federally and a \$405 million by the O'Farrell government at the state level.

The heavy congestion which presently exists along Pennant Hills Road has a very serious impact on the suburbs of Wahroonga, Normanhurst and Thornleigh. NorthConnex is a project that will help to address that problem. It will be a nine-kilometre long tunnel, running under the existing route of Pennant Hills Road and it will link the M1 and the M2 motorways. The consequence will be to reduce congestion, shorten travel times and improve safety. It is a major project to build these twin tunnels and the total budget is around \$3 billion. When this project is completed residents along Pennant Hills Road will enjoy a quieter, safer and more pleasant community to live in. It will also make Pennant Hills road easier and quicker to use for local traffic.

Importantly, the project is now moving into the planning approval phase. The benefits that we can expect from this project include an easing of traffic congestion. In particular, it is expected to enable commuters and freight trucks to bypass up to 21 traffic lights and reduce travel time by up to 15 minutes. It will also reduce the number of heavy vehicles travelling along Pennant Hills Road by more than 5,000 trucks per day. As well as a benefit to Pennant Hills Road there is also expected to be a benefit to the suburbs along the Pacific Highway—which runs right through the centre of Bradfield—as some traffic between Sydney and the Central Coast and points north will divert from the Pacific Highway to NorthConnex.

This is a very important piece of infrastructure, jointly funded by the federal and state governments, which has now reached an advanced stage of assessment. I want to see this project built to deliver benefits to the communities that I represent and I want to ensure that, as it proceeds, its design addresses the proper and reasonable concerns of nearby residents. Key design principles for this project have been identified in work done over the last decade. I am keen to ensure that community feedback is properly captured and reflected in the design of this very important project.