



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE
Regional Australia: Infrastructure
QUESTION

Tuesday, 23 May 2017

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

QUESTION

Date Tuesday, 23 May 2017
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Questioner Littleproud, David, MP
Speaker

Source House
Proof No
Responder Joyce, Barnaby, MP
Question No.

Regional Australia: Infrastructure

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Mr LITTLEPROUD (Maranoa) (14:52): My question is to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources. Will the Deputy Prime Minister outline to the House how the government is boosting growth in our agricultural sector through its investment in regional infrastructure, particularly in my electorate of Maranoa? Is the Deputy Prime Minister aware of any threats to our plans to secure the future of regional Australia?

Mr JOYCE (New England—Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources) (14:53): I thank the honourable member for his question and note the great benefit that the Inland Rail will be to the seat of Maranoa, especially around Goondiwindi, which will have the capacity for growth and the capacity for greater connectivity to Brisbane, greater connectivity to Melbourne, greater connectivity to Sydney. It will be a real boon to the inland areas of Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria. It will deliver over \$22½ billion of direct and indirect benefits. It will create 16,000 jobs in construction, with 700 ongoing jobs. It will benefit Labor seats as well: McEwen, Blair, Maribyrnong. As the Australian Logistics Council says, it will have transformative potential. As the NFF says, it will be the crown jewel. New South Wales Farmers is ecstatic about it. Pacific National, one of the great logistics companies, says that the Inland Rail is its true game changer.

So this is an article of vision. It is an article of infrastructure. It goes hand in glove with dams, with the Building Better Regions Fund, with Roads to Recovery, with the Bridges Renewal Program. It goes with our program of making sure that our nation's infrastructure matches up with the infrastructure of places such as Canada, the United States and Europe. It is something we have been fighting for for so long but we are actually delivering.

You ask if there is any risk to it. We would never know. The member for Grayndler, Mr Albanese, the big easy, is never allowed to ask a question. We will never find out. He is almost mute.

Do you know why he can't ask a question? It is because he is in the race. He is in the race for this fellow's job, and the race is off and running! The member for Sydney knows the race is off and running. She has got her sandshoes on. She knows it is on. They are all looking down. As for the member for McMahan, we wouldn't know. He is still in front of the mirror, but he is thinking about going for a run. If you want to back a roughie, there is the member for Corio. He is backed by Bob Hawke, so I would put a few dollars on him. The member for Rankin—if you want a roughie—you would put a bit of money on him. The member for Blaxland—

A government member: What about the member for Lilley?

Mr JOYCE: The member for Lilley hasn't got a hope. I tell you what, the member for Lilley is in a neck-and-neck race with the member for Fenner, the member for Hunter and the ambulance. So the race is on. The shadow minister for infrastructure, the member for Grayndler, Mr Albanese, the big easy, will never get a question here, but he gets a few questions on Sky and he gets a few questions on *ABC 24*.

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Prime Minister will refer to members by their correct title.

Mr JOYCE: The member for Grayndler is getting a few questions somewhere else. He is talking, but he is just not talking to him! (*Time expired*)