



PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

Question Time

9 November 2021

LIGHT RAIL – BUILD THEM HERE

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (14:35):

My question is directed to the Premier. Given that his overseas Inner West light rail trams are cracked and the service will be shut down for up to a year and a half, will the Premier commit to purchasing Australian-made transport infrastructure, back Australian manufacturing and repudiate his predecessor's comments that New South Wales is not good at building trains?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (14:35): New South Wales is great at everything, absolutely everything.

The SPEAKER: Order! Government members will remain silent.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: When it comes to manufacturing in New South Wales, we lead the way, as the jobs Minister knows. When the Opposition was off building its trains in China, when it was off getting the French in to build the train lines and import the tunnel from Austria, there was a reason the unemployment rate was so high under Labor. It did not build anything—it did not do anything. Yes, I accept the premise in the question that there are challenges on the light rail and safety is paramount. Well done to the Minister for stepping in and making the right decision. There will be challenges when we are building so much.

We are driving ahead, building a brighter future for the people of New South Wales. It is full steam ahead in New South Wales and there are more people in work because of the infrastructure program and the substantive investment we have made. We can build trains here but we will not lay the tracks for them to run on, which is

exactly what occurred under Labor with its little Rozelle Metro, which cost 500 million for a glossy brochure and a nice little advertising campaign. It is bricks and mortar—the infrastructure—that members on this side of the House are delivering right across the board and generating jobs everywhere.

Recently I was with the Minister at the M4-M5 project—another project Labor opposed. It opposed them all—Metro North West, Sydney Metro West. It opposed the job creation from all of those infrastructure investments. That is why in the last 10 years we have had the lowest unemployment in New South Wales. That is why we have been driving our economy forward. It is because of those projects. I was with the Minister talking to the workers and the apprentices, who love it. They have hope and optimism. While those opposite are talking New South Wales down, we are talking it up. That confidence ensured that we had a strong rebound last year and it is confidence that will not only deliver a strong economic recovery this time but also set up our State for future success.

For many of those workers, this is not their first job on these projects. They have been working on government infrastructure projects ever since we have been in office. I met someone who previously worked on the Metro North West and is now working on the Sydney Metro. As soon as we came to office the projects we created and the investments we have made have delivered a jobs bonanza right across the State—\$108 billion worth in investments. The Opposition opposed all of those projects and the means of funding them, such as asset recycling is opposed. We made some tough decisions about pausing public sector pay.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Newcastle to order for the second time.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: It was a tough decision, I accept, and an unpopular decision. Once again, it was the right decision that enabled the fiscal capacity of the State to invest record amounts across the board. Opposition members opposed every financial measure that has set up the New South Wales economy and laid its strong financial foundations, but come budget time they are always with their begging bowls, asking for money for their electorates, which in my benevolence I deliver to them every time.

Dr Hugh McDermott: Thank you!

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I do not need a thank you. We know on this side of the House that what we do is right. We know the facts and the public knows the facts. The Opposition opposed asset recycling, strong fiscal management and infrastructure projects such as WestConnex, the M2, the Metro Northwest, Metro City & Southwest.

Mr David Elliott: Hawkesbury Bridge.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Hawkesbury Bridge is another one they were against. Let us go back to the Hawkesbury. What a great project. They love it. I am getting a statue made next to that bridge to look over that great river. The bottom line is that members opposite oppose strong financial management and infrastructure investment. It has been our pipeline that has driven jobs growth and economic growth that has kept New South Wales strong.