




Speech By
Shane King

MEMBER FOR KURWONGBAH

Record of Proceedings, 14 March 2025

ADJOURNMENT

Vocational Education and Training

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (9.19 pm): I stand here tonight a little perplexed about the previous debate on the Trusts Bill, which was declared urgent, that just dragged on and on. I did not rise to talk about that. I rose to talk about something far more important: putting on the record my sincere thanks and admiration for Queensland tradies.

I encourage anyone considering career options, or a career change, to consider trying a trade, not in this place, obviously, but some members could probably do that. Tradies have never been more appreciated in Queensland. From the Big Build program that our former state Labor government invested in, to new home developments across the state and to the recovery works required when natural disasters strike, our tradies are constantly in demand, from chippies to concreters, plumbers, brickies and sparkies, like myself. I understand that we now have another sparky in the place. Welcome. I would prefer it if he were on the tools, but welcome. We can work together on some things. We need more tradies and we need them now.

I was so proud to be part of a government that invested in free TAFE for Queenslanders. It is an initiative that has been so popular—over 88,000 people have benefitted from it. According to the TAFE website, our general fee-free places in Queensland are full for this year.

Our need to train tradies is also why I was so pleased to see the Albanese Labor government pass legislation in February to lock in ongoing federal funding for free TAFE, a decision I know that our local candidates in the upcoming election—Rhiannyn Douglas for Longman and Ali France for Dickson—both lobbied for. Labor governments invest in education and training because we understand the transformational power such investment brings, unlike the LNP, who said during the federal debate on free TAFE, 'If you don't pay for something, you don't value it.' We do not think that way.

I am interested to know if the Crisafulli government agrees with this sentiment. Many of the fee-free TAFE courses started disappearing once the Queensland LNP was elected. The disappearances have not gone unnoticed. My office has received emails from constituents expressing frustration that the course they were looking into suddenly was not available after the government changed hands. I am also interested to know if the Crisafulli government intends to continue the Labor tradition of co-investing in fee-free TAFE beyond the study of the training minister's own profession, which is an honourable profession but we need other trades out there as well. I would like to hear a commitment from the Crisafulli government that it will safeguard the Certificate III guarantee introduced and funded by Labor.

With the short time I have left, I would also like to, once again, shout out to the tradies from Energex and Ergon and the people from the SES. My old workmates are still out there restoring power in a time that is really difficult for them.




Speech By
Shane King

MEMBER FOR KURWONGBAH

Record of Proceedings, 3 April 2025

ADJOURNMENT

Narangba, School Bus Services

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (9.18 pm): I rise tonight to talk about school bus services in Narangba, specifically the need for services to help students get home from Narangba Valley State High School on Wednesday afternoons when classes finish early at 12.30 pm. I have been working with the executive and the P&C at Narangba Valley State High School as well as with Kangaroo Bus Lines, facilitating meetings with Translink representatives. I know the team at Kangaroo Bus Lines have done a lot of work on formal proposals to provide the services the school wants in a way that could be almost cost neutral. That is why I was disappointed recently to receive a letter from the new Minister for Transport telling me that such changes are not possible.

I do note the minister's advice in the same letter that funding for school bus services is prioritised towards expanding the network into new growth areas. I want to point out that 2,500 new homes are now under construction in the new Kinma Valley, around three kilometres from the high school. That is on top of the 1,500 new homes in the Narangba Heights and Ridge View estates. Both fall within the school's catchment area.

With a student body of almost 2,000 now and an enrolment capacity of almost 2½ thousand, we should be investing in transport services for Narangba Valley State High School. I look forward to the minister visiting my electorate this month to talk about the Bruce Highway western alternative when he will get to see this growth for himself if we drive the route.

With more high schools delivering flexible timetables to accommodate vocational education options, work experience placements and a focus on students needing intervention and support, it seems to me that Translink's priorities do need a review, especially when Translink constantly tells us it will not put bus services on for these new estates because the patronage would not warrant them. I reckon that has changed since Labor brought in 50-cent fares.

We have heard so much about community safety in the chamber this week, but when faced with an opportunity to support student safety in Narangba Valley so far it is a no from the LNP, but we will see that change we hope. Student safety is compromised when students leave the school campus to fill in time while waiting for a bus, usually at the shopping centre across the road. The sheer number of students is overwhelming at the shopping centre for other community members, especially local seniors—members can imagine 2,000 students of an afternoon.

Unsupervised students may also be tempted to commit criminal offences. I have heard from community members, shopkeepers and local police about an increase in incidents on Wednesday afternoons. We have an opportunity to turn this around and it is as simple as funding some buses. These are good kids. Let us not let them get on the wrong side of the law through something that can be fixed easily. That is why I have just launched a petition at shaneking.net.au to send a new message and let the minister and the department know that our community deserves better and we want a solution.