

Supply Bill Wed May 10, 2006

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond): I wish to speak on supply and support the bill, but especially in regard to transport, energy and infrastructure. It is disappointing that the Rann government has spent and allocated money for the tramline extension and the opening rail and road bridges for the Port River Expressway, when it could be spent on regional roads and energy infrastructure. This money would be better channelled into offsetting the road maintenance backlog which currently sits at about \$200 million for this state. The poor standard of state roads is a concern not only for the electorate of Hammond but for all country and metropolitan electorates. An example of the potential impact the Port River opening bridges may have on primary industry is when a Panamax vessel loads grain at Outer Harbor. This is vital to all stakeholders because initially ABB grain will have only 60 000 tonnes of storage at Outer Harbour and a Panamax vessel has a capacity of 100 000 tonnes of grain. The rail bridge has to be effective for trains to be readily able to transport the grain to alleviate storage problems. The state's farmers need security that grain trains will not be held up through the rail bridges being opened, for the sustainability of their income and industry.

Whilst developing the Port River Expressway is a valuable contribution to South Australia's economic development, the project's vision for the tourism industry and urban regeneration in Port Adelaide is taking money away from other major road transport routes that are in dire need of repair and maintenance. The safety of all users of roads, whether domestic or commercial, is paramount, and more funding from the state government needs to be invested in these roads to prevent unnecessary road accidents and fatalities.

The federal government has invested \$26.3 million of additional funding in South Australian local roads through AusLink funding to improve land transport infrastructure. I am sure that the people of South Australia would prefer the state government to spend AusLink partnering funding on upgrading state and local roads than spend \$130 million on building opening road and rail bridges across the Port River and extending the tramline from Victoria Square to North Terrace.

As far as power infrastructure is concerned, large areas of Hammond need a power upgrade to attract investment in the area. I applaud the development of the Australian Zircon mine in the Mindarie area, but it will only have access to power on a private line in the time frame required for its start-up in March 2007; therefore, no other business can utilise the power from this line. To realise the full potential of the Mallee region, more electricity infrastructure is vital, especially if more intensive animal and secondary industries are to be attracted to the region. If the Rann government is the government for all South Australians, attention must be directed to the needs of the people and businesses in rural and regional South Australia.