

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond): I rise today to speak in support of the bill. Rail safety is certainly on the mind of people in regional areas. The high speed rail line from Melbourne to Adelaide passes through the seat of Hammond, and interconnecting with that are feeder lines from the Mallee—that is, from Loxton via Karoonda to Tailem Bend—and the line from Pinnaroo to Tailem Bend.

One issue I have with the Loxton to Tailem Bend line is that Australian Zircon is soon to begin commercial operations at Mindarie. I think that is a great boom for the area, especially in times of extended drought as we have now, and it is certainly providing jobs for farmers who can work four days and then return to their farms for four days and improve their income in these tight times.

The issue we have is that there will be three slow trains a week (which, I think, are restricted to about 60 km/h because of the standard of the rail line).

This will present something different to the people in the Mallee who are not used to the frequency of the trains, albeit only several times a week, but they are not used to trains travelling through those crossings. Over the years, we have seen many deadly accidents at crossings and most, if not all, can be avoided.

Therefore, I would be urging the authorities to do all they can to have the appropriate signage in place so that we do not have a tragedy or a severe accident on that line. In a bipartisan way, I commend the member for Bright for her Appropriation Bill contribution to the house on 19 June. She made the comment that we are making the single biggest investment in public transport infrastructure that this state has seen in more than a decade. She said that it demonstrates our commitment to revitalising and modernising our state's public transport system.

Mr Griffiths interjecting:

Mr PEDERICK: Absolutely; it's maintenance. Then she went on to talk in particular about the \$115 million—

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am struggling to understand what the contribution of the member for Bright on the Appropriation Bill has to do with rail safety.

Mr PEDERICK: Well, it was all—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hammond will hold his guns for a moment. I apologise, I have been distracted and I have not been listening to the member for Hammond's contribution, but I will listen to it. He does need to speak to the bill.

Mr PEDERICK: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for your protection which was sorely needed. The Minister for Transport is having a crack at his own budget line on maintenance of railway lines that have been severely neglected by this government—as has infrastructure right across the regions. We are talking about the buckling of railway lines. Is the minister arguing that that has nothing to do with safety? It is put up as a major transport infrastructure program yet it is maintenance which has been let go and which should have been done over many years. The minister has had five years to do this work so there is no point—

The Hon. P.F. Conlon interjecting:

Mr PEDERICK: Okay, that's fine, you will have plenty of opportunity—and I am sure you will. It was intriguing that members opposite are talking about

replacing sleepers and improving crossings. It is sorely needed. The member for Bright made her brilliant six minute contribution to the Appropriation Bill, and I was waiting for the next part of her speech—which could have continued for 20 minutes—but she thought that re-sleepering the railway line was the biggest thing in the budget. With those words, I commend the bill.