



Speech by

Jann Stuckey

MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

Hansard Tuesday, 10 November 2009

TWEED RIVER ENTRANCE SAND BYPASS PROJECT

Mrs STUCKEY (Currumbin—LNP) (9.46 pm): Ever since the Tweed River Entrance Sand Bypass Project commenced at the turn of this century beaches and surf breaks in my electorate have suffered despite countless calls for flexibility within the pumping program and grid, better monitoring and community consultation.

A knee-jerk pre-election promise by Labor to supposedly fix Kirra with \$1.5 million has exposed this government as the hollow master of spin that it is. I wrote to the minister on 3 April asking to be involved and over 11 weeks later she finally wrote back and said—

I appreciate your interest in Kirra Beach and your commitment to keeping the public informed. You may be interested to know I have requested a meeting with Minister Tony Kelly (from NSW) to discuss these issues. I am happy to report back the outcomes of any discussions.

That was on 22 June and I am still waiting. The minister had the hide to tell an untruth on radio only last month by suggesting I have never contacted her about this. I read about plans for Kirra in the newspaper and my question on notice fails to get an answer as to dollars spent on sand excavation and community consultation undertaken with the Gold Coast City Council. An FOI, internal review and external review on behalf of local stakeholders to reveal the conditions of the Tweed project contract took six months and when completed did not disclose the required information.

However, back in April this year in a reply to another of my questions on notice the minister spoke of the establishment and maintenance of an exclusion zone approximately 100 metres around Kirra Reef and also that Queensland was in negotiations with New South Wales to reduce the quantity of sand delivered to the area. Why then the secrecy in the FOI process? What is there to hide? Surely if someone has breached a contract and allowed Kirra Reef to be smothered the government would want to know—or would it?

Negative press on 13 October about stage 2 to move sand to the dunes at the back of the beach being put on hold caused a backflip from the minister's senior staff who announced that the minister would proceed with the project. This week in the *Gold Coast Bulletin* the minister admits she has been working closely with Minister Kelly from New South Wales and they have decided to get a feasibility study underway by the end of the year. Apparently the study will consider alternative sites for the dredge and operational improvements which is what I and other key stakeholders have been pushing for these past six years.

In another example of this government's arrogance, local stakeholders such as the surfing, business and residential community have not been consulted. They have not been contacted about the feasibility study or involved in any consultation as to what should be done. I am talking about hundreds of years of experience being ignored. A new outlet for the sand is also to be investigated but I cannot see what is left of \$1.5 million paying for this. New South Wales and its track record for not paying for infrastructure around the border is legendary.

My office has written again to the minister asking for some feedback on her discussions. I have a deep attachment to Currumbin and the people who live therein. If the government truly wants to fix Kirra it should come down and talk to the local community and to talk to me, too.