



LUCKY BAY FERRY ROAD SEALING

7 February 2007

A petition signed by 1 463 residents of South Australia, requesting the house to urge the Minister for Transport to allocate funds for the immediate sealing of the road from the Lincoln Highway to the ferry terminal at Lucky Bay, was presented by the Mrs Penfold.

Petition received.

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): Today a petition for the state government to help seal the Lucky Bay to Lincoln Highway Road that provides access to the Lucky Bay ferry terminal was presented to parliament. Late last year, on 8 December, I went to the official launch of the ferry service between Wallaroo and Lucky Bay. It reinforced my appreciation and admiration for the entrepreneurs of this world, those people who take the risks and, as someone once said, who dare to dream, dare to do, and dare to make their dreams come true—and, in my experience, while everyone around them is often telling them: 'It can't be done.'

In this case, I refer to Stuart Ballantyne and Stephanie Dawson. The ferry service is a private operation that has not cost the government and taxpayers of this state. In fact, it will save millions of dollars in the cost of repairs to 300 kilometres of road, make considerable savings in greenhouse gases, and prevent injuries and deaths. The ferry operators, who have experience in ferry services elsewhere in Australia, are currently leasing a vessel while a much larger capacity purpose-built ferry is being built. The ferry berths are being completed and millions of dollars are being spent. There is no doubt about Stuart and Stephanie's commitment to make the service a success.

The value of the service was proved dramatically late last month when torrential rain cut all road access to Eyre Peninsula from the east and the north. The ferry became the only vehicle link for the transport of perishables to Eyre Peninsula and for people going to and from Adelaide to fulfil their commitments. However, the ferry access road from the Lincoln Highway was badly affected by the rain, creating problems for vehicles and passengers because of the muddy and slippery conditions.

A properly sealed road would have avoided these problems; a properly sealed road would have been safer. This government talks much about safety on the roads, so now is the time to put some action with the talk and seal this section of road over which hundreds of vehicles pass daily.

The numbers will increase massively when the purpose-built ferries begin operation, one in March and another later in the year. There is now no doubt that the service will be a success, and even the most adamant of sceptics is now silent. Some doubters are now even singing the praises of the service. The ferry will significantly improve access to health, education, sporting and cultural activities only available in our capital city of Adelaide, so this is a matter of social justice for those people who live on Eyre Peninsula.

There have been major hurdles to starting the service. Government departments continually avoided looking at the big picture, and failed to look at the many benefits for the environment, for road safety, for tourism and business. Requirements by government departments and scrutiny of activities and developments are necessary. However, the requirements should take into account the advantages of the project, in this case principally to Yorke Peninsula and Eyre Peninsula, but also to the state as a whole. The ferry will be a boon for tourism, and traffic to and from the

regions, and to a wide range of businesses and other developments. Return day-trips across the gulf with a bus tour of points of interest such as the world-class fish farming enterprise at Arno Bay have already begun.

Going back to the early part of the 20th century prior to World War I, exchanges between Wallaroo and Cowell by sailing boat were popular, especially those involving the brass bands. Around 1950, the legendary Sylvia Birdseye researched the use of a hovercraft for a gulf crossing, so the Lucky Bay-Wallaroo ferry service is scarcely a new idea.

Stephanie Dawson and Stuart Ballantyne are two of the most recent pioneers in a long history of people who have come to Eyre Peninsula with dreams, and who have made those dreams come true. Early settlers came in small sailing boats, in horse and carts—in some cases walking from the 'mainland', as the rest of the state was referred to in those times, and still is by some. Then they came in cars and trucks and coastal steamers: the *Minnipa*, *Morialta*, and *Moonta*. Sylvia Birdseye started her bus runs. Small aeroplanes provided local services. The self-contained Eyre Peninsula rail service carried people inland and to Ceduna. The *Troubridge* ferry service replaced earlier steamboats plying between Port Lincoln and Adelaide. The *Island Seaway* began. Many of the air, rail and bus services have gone, and the *Troubridge* was decommissioned decades ago. Now we have huge B-double and triple trucks, and Cape Bulker and Panamax ships take our produce around the world. Eyre Peninsula produces as much as 40 per cent of the state's grain and 65 per cent of the state's seafood. It can rightly be termed the treasury that helps supply South Australians with their quality of life.

Following was the conclusion of the speech

Nothing stays the same. Change is the only constant in the world. Mining from the Gawler Craton mineralisation is just beginning. It will bring a new era to Eyre Peninsula and adjacent regions to the west and north. The Lucky Bay-Wallaroo ferry service is indicative of this new era. It is imperative therefore that the access road from Lincoln Highway is sealed.

The purpose of government is to facilitate private enterprise's wealth creators in order to generate jobs and wealth for the state and the nation, to provide employment and to pay wages. This has been understood over the years by a few visionary politicians and bureaucrats who have had similar entrepreneurial instincts. People like Tom Playford who built towns, roads, power supplies, railways and pipelines. He opened up Leigh Creek, and extended the power supply to rural and regional South Australia. Today we look to private enterprise to undertake these projects but that was not an option then.

One of the most frequent criticisms of the Labor state government is its neglect of infrastructure. Efforts to seal the ferry access road from Lincoln Highway to Lucky Bay – a distance of about 14 kilometres – is an excellent example of Labor's lack of financial nous and lack of interest in infrastructure. A roadside sign says it all: "Mr Rann has \$45 million for a tram but nothing for this road."

In 2006, Franklin Harbour District Council applied for \$900,000 federal funding under the AusLink Strategic Regional Program, to be matched with \$900,000 from the state government and a \$135,000 contribution from council, to pay for the sealing of the road. The major factor in council's application being unsuccessful was the failure of the Rann Labor government to confirm its matching funding in writing.

Now the absolute necessity for the road to be sealed has been borne out by the recent torrential rains that cut road access to Eyre Peninsula, and to the dangers posed by the unsealed road with the hundreds of vehicles that travel this road daily.

I present this petition with the hope that commonsense will prevail. I regret that it is not a petition thanking the government for sealing the road.

3rd May 2006

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): My question is to the Premier. Given that the Premier gave an undertaking to fast-track development of the Lucky Bay-Wallaroo ferry service in September last year, will he intervene to facilitate the necessary transfer of land title which is currently being held up by the Department of Environment and Heritage? Twelve months ago, the head of the department of environment said to me, 'Liz, this ferry won't happen.' In September 2005, after a delegation, the Premier intervened to fast-track the project. The proponent of the ferry

service has still not been granted the necessary approvals and freehold title he needs before he can establish the berth at Lucky Bay.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Minister for Transport): This question from the member for Flinders is simply the latest instalment in her incredibly churlish behaviour about everything this government has done for the Eyre Peninsula.

Mrs Penfold interjecting:

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I will answer you, because we are the people who have done a good job on this. I would like to know what interests there are on the Eyre Peninsula in this ferry. I would like to know all of that. I would like to know all that goes on about that, but we will not go into that today because there will be another time for it. The history is that a proponent came to us with a proposal for a ferry.

Mrs Penfold: Over 12 months ago.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Yes, over 12 months ago. We went out of our way to assist the proponent with that ferry, and do you know what happened mid-term? He changed the proposal. Despite that, and despite that presenting many difficulties, we continued to assist the proponent. Can I say that I have had no complaints from the proponent. I do not know what interests he has, but I have had no complaints from the proponent, because he knows what we are doing. I point out to the member that some of her constituents are a bit worried about her naked enthusiasm for this: some of them have raised their concerns with me about it. But, despite a lot of difficulties and in difficult circumstances, we assisted with a lot of sensitivity because the region is a coastal protection area.

I have been to Lucky Bay, because I do actually assist people when I say I am going to. I convened a meeting and we had the good grace to invite the member and, as I remember, the then leader of the opposition, to see what we could do, and we went out and did what we said we would. What we cannot do is change the geography of the area and the material, geographical facts. What I will say is: we continue to assist this proponent with a very difficult proposal because he is taking the risk. I would think there will be no complaints from him because he is not a whingeing, churlish proponent. He is actually a sensible person who has a proposal whom we are assisting. I would like to know why the member for Flinders is so much more concerned about this than is the proponent. Perhaps it is her usual churlish attitude to anything this government does, or perhaps it is something else. But, no doubt, we will deal with that at another time.