



**PAUL FLETCHER MP
MEMBER FOR BRADFIELD
MINISTER FOR URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE AND CITIES
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TRANSCRIPT - 4BC - Drive with Ben Davis

Topics: New funding announced for the M1

BEN DAVIS:

I'm going to get straight into it this afternoon. We've been hearing about the M1, the funding, the billion dollars that is on the table by the Turnbull Government, that announcement made as I was going to air this afternoon. They're saying - as they have been saying since 2015 - a 50/50 split with the Palaszczuk Government. So I had our Transport Minister and Minister for Main Roads Mark Bailey on the program. Would he come to the party? Will the Palaszczuk Government give way on the M1 and stump up the other half?

MARK BAILEY:

“What we want to see Ben, is the Turnbull Government treat Queensland just like they treat New South Wales. The M1 just across the border gets 80/20 funding under the Federal Government's own rules. In fact the M1 Gateway Arterial North in Brisbane, currently under construction right now, 80/20 but yet for some reason they think the M1 and M1 motorists aren't worth as much as motorists elsewhere and we want the fair funding deals. So I'm happy to sit down with them anytime, anywhere Ben and talk through this. We've got some good funding on the table. We can get at least one of those upgrades, that would be a third upgrade funded. There's enough money there to get cracking on that and I think they should be flexible about how they allocate that funding with our funding.”

BEN DAVIS:

Right well there we go. There, to me, sounds like a little bit of wiggle room. Yes, we'd like to sit down and start talking but you know what? This talking has been going on since 2015 - 2015 - they've been trying to split the bill 80/20, 50/50. Why aren't we treated like New South Wales? Well Paul Fletcher is the Federal Infrastructure Minister, he's on the line. Minister, good afternoon to you. Is there some compromise with the Queensland Government in the near foreseeable future?

PAUL FLETCHER:

Well the first thing I'd say is there's obviously- today the Turnbull Government has committed a billion dollars to vitally needed upgrades on the M1 corridor, one at the southern end at Varsity Lakes

to Tugun and one closer to Brisbane between Eight Mile Plains and Daisy Hill. The next point I'd make is that upgrades to the M1 on the Gold Coast-Brisbane corridor have been funded on a 50/50 basis between the Federal Government and the Queensland Government. Both under this Federal Government, the Liberal National Government, and previously under the previous Labor Federal Government. So it's well established on the M1 corridor which of course runs through one of the biggest urban areas in Australia that the funding is 50/50. The principle's pretty clear that in urban areas the Turnbull Government, the Federal Government provides funding on a 50/50 basis. In regional areas it's more usually 80/20.

BEN DAVIS:

Minister you just heard Mark Bailey then, he said well why an 80/20 split when it comes to the Gateway, a bit further up which is still part of an urban part of south east Queensland. Why the difference?

PAUL FLETCHER:

Well look, the principle is pretty clear and consistently M1 funding, Brisbane to Gold Coast has been on a 50/50 basis. Can I make the point that very shortly work is about to start on two projects: Mudgeeraba to Varsity Lakes and the Gateway merge. One of them was \$110 million of Commonwealth money, the other was \$115 million of Commonwealth money. And when we announced our funding for those two projects in the 2016 Federal Election, the initial response from the Queensland Government and then from Minister Mark Bailey at the time was we had this big farce about what was the funding shares going to be, we said at the time it was a 50/50 proposal and look, there was a bit of argy-bargy at the time. Pleasingly we managed to get to an outcome and as soon as the Commonwealth Games are over, the substantive work on those two projects is going to get under way.

BEN DAVIS:

And Minister that's fantastic, it's going to get underway but there's still about \$800 million shortfall to get the job done. Is there room for the Turnbull Government and the Palaszczuk Government to sit down and come to some sort of agreement? If it's not 80/20, if it's not 50/50, that seems to be the [indistinct] point, is there a 60/40 in you? Is there a 70/30? Something. Anything?

PAUL FLETCHER:

Well Ben, my point is that first of all we put a game changing financial commitment on the table today - a billion dollars - to relieve congestion on two major projects on the M1, Brisbane-Gold Coast corridor. That's thanks to the advocacy of Karen Andrews, Bert van Manen, Ross Vasta - LNP federal parliamentarians on the Gold Coast and surrounding areas who've done a terrific job in securing this funding. Now what I would say is the last time that we made commitments to projects on the M1, it was on a 50/50 basis. We had a bit of toing and froing between the Federal Government and the Queensland Government. Minister Mark Bailey and I had ultimately constructive conversations there and the proof in the pudding is that work on those major projects, substantive work, is going to get underway very shortly.

BEN DAVIS:

And Minister, I just need a yes or no. Is there wiggle room for the Turnbull Government on the funding issue, on how it's split?

PAUL FLETCHER:

Look what we've done...

BEN DAVIS:

Or are you committed to 50/50 and that's it?

PAUL FLETCHER:

We're committed to 50/50. That being said I look forward to constructive discussions with the Queensland Government and Minister Mark Bailey because we want to put this money to work. The next thing I'd like to see the Queensland Government...

BEN DAVIS:

So you're saying there's a chance. In the words of Jim Carrey.

PAUL FLETCHER:

What I'm saying is we are focused on putting a billion dollars to work to relieve congestion, to improve travel times on the M1 corridor. I'm looking forward to meeting Minister Mark Bailey soon. I want to see the Queensland Government bring forward detailed business cases to Infrastructure Australia just as they've done on previous stages of M1 upgrades. We're determined to get this money put to use and what we've done is sped it up so that this money could be ready to go in 2020 when the two projects that are about to commence next week get done. Then after that this money will be available for the next round of projects because it's so important that the M1 is seeing continuous growth in its capacity to meet the demand.

BEN DAVIS:

Very much so. I'll host you at my place if we need to. We've been talking about this for three years and I know you weren't in the role three years ago but this is something that the Turnbull Government, the Palaszczuk Government have been butting heads about for three years. Can we just sit down and get it natted out?

PAUL FLETCHER:

And look I look forward to working with the Queensland Government, with Minister Mark Bailey, and it's very important that we now sit down and work on this but with the game changing announcement today of a billion dollars, that's very, very important.

BEN DAVIS:

Thank you, Paul, thank you for your time, Minister. We have to leave it there. Paul Fletcher, the Federal Infrastructure Minister.