



Hon. Paul Lucas MP



Queensland
Government

Our ref: MC18285

Your ref: 600-05

Minister for
Transport and Main Roads

23 DEC 2005

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Mr Laurie *Neil*

**Re: Petition No. 600-05: Bruce Highway (Cooroy to Curra)
Strategic Planning Study**

I refer to a petition lodged with the Legislative Assembly by Ms Elisa Roberts MP, Member for Gympie, on 2 December 2005, about the Bruce Highway (Cooroy to Curra) Strategic Planning Study, which is being conducted by the Queensland Government with Commonwealth Government participation and oversight. I acknowledge the sensitivity associated with this study, as with any major road planning study, and encourage and welcome feedback.

The matters raised in the petition have been noted and have been referred to the study team for consideration.

The Honourable Warren Truss MP, federal Minister for Transport and Regional Services, announced the public display of the five route options on 24 October 2005, which appeared in the *Gympie Times* on 26 October 2005. The display was subsequently launched by Minister Truss on 4 November 2005.

However, in response to community concern about these options, I announced an extension of time for community consultation from 9 December 2005 to 27 January 2006 giving people more time to have their say. I subsequently wrote to Minister Truss suggesting that the joint steering committee be instructed to re-look at alignments that were at a greater distance to the east and west of the Gympie township.

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I would be happy to direct the study team to delete any of the existing options from consideration should the Commonwealth so wish. However, because the Bruce Highway is a full federal funding responsibility and that this decision might further increase the study cost and the initial traffic volumes on the bypass may be significantly lower, I believe these instructions should only take place with the approval of Minister Truss as federal Minister for Transport and Regional Services. As a result, Minister Truss announced that consideration would be given to new route options.

I also met with Ms Elisa Roberts MP, Member for Gympie, Councillor Mick Vernados, Mayor of Cooloola Shire, and members of the Cooroy-Curra Consultative Committee to hear first hand about community concerns.

I strongly agree with the views expressed by the community that action needs to be taken in order to address the safety concerns on this section of the federally-funded national highway which is acknowledged as one of the worst sections of road in Australia. It is a matter of finding the most appropriate route. That is why input from the community is a critical part of the planning study and your comments are appreciated. The study team will review all the feedback and work closely with community reference groups when considering new route options.

Thank you for your interest in this important consultation process.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Lucas', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

PAUL LUCAS MP

Minister for Transport and Main Roads