



Speech by

**JULIE ATTWOOD**

**MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY**

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Hansard 8 November 2001

**ANTI-GRAFFITI GROUP, NON-CONFORMING PETITION; INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE VOLUNTEER**

**Mrs ATTWOOD** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (1.27 a.m.): I seek leave to table a non-confirming petition of 865 signatories on behalf of the Anti-Graffiti Group.

Leave granted.

I rise to speak on behalf of the volunteers within the Mount Ommaney electorate and on behalf of volunteers in general. The International Year of Volunteers is a great time to be honouring the efforts, sacrifices and dedication of our volunteers. Volunteers come from various ethnic backgrounds, are representative of nearly all age groups and contribute to the wellbeing and development of our society in whatever way they can. Generally, they are not thought of until they are needed.

In this the International Year of Volunteers, we as a community have the opportunity to thank those members of our society who routinely volunteer for tasks. Some of these activities would not get done at all if volunteers were not the driving force behind them. I ask members to think about some of the neighbourhood protection programs, the children's activities and environmental clean-ups. If they did, they would realise quickly how much we rely on volunteers. Volunteers are often not recognised for the magnificent contributions that they make. They are the unsung heroes, ensuring that sporting events are held; ensuring that our environment, both the plants and the animals, is protected; supporting the disadvantaged; and assisting those less well off than ourselves.

In common with many other members and to provide an equitable way of selecting individuals to receive awards, I called for nominations and it was difficult for the selection panel to pick the recipients. The selection panel and I were honoured to present these awards as a small token of our community's appreciation of individual or group efforts to improve our society, assist our neighbours and preserve our environment. On 29 October and 2 November we presented the awards at two functions within the Mount Ommaney electorate.

This brings me to another issue relating to volunteers. The federal government has distributed grants to volunteer groups, and the latest IYV 2001 Small Equipment Grants Program applications closed on 24 September. Processing the applications reeks of blatant pork-barrelling by the Howard government. The appalling situation exists where the Commonwealth Department of Families and Community Services claims that the applications will not be publicised until after the forthcoming election. Members can check it on the Commonwealth's own web site, [www.iyv2001.gov.au](http://www.iyv2001.gov.au).

The federal members for Maranoa, Wide Bay and Forde seem to have a direct line to the grants directorate. They released lists of the recipients of these grants in their own electorates last month. I table some of the press releases. As far as I have been able to determine, Labor members and the volunteers within their electorates have not been accommodated nearly as well.

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