



Speech by

Mike Horan

MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA SOUTH

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ENDEAVOUR FOUNDATION

Mr HORAN (Toowoomba South—NPA) (10.03 p.m.): Last week in Toowoomba many families with children with disabilities were devastated to hear the news that the Endeavour Foundation would be closing down the farm and garden nursery in Toowoomba. All of us in Toowoomba hold the Endeavour Foundation in the highest regard. I do not know what we would have ever done in our city for the families who have children with disabilities had it not been for the Endeavour Foundation.

The accommodation services it has provided over the years, the activity centres that it has provided over the years and the vocational training opportunities that it has provided over the years at its factory, farm and nursery have simply been outstanding. It has been sad to see the financial difficulties that the Endeavour Foundation has faced through the 1990s and the start of this century.

One of the problems that I believe the Endeavour Foundation and a lot of other charities has had is that the takings from its bingo games, raffles and art unions—where it used to make so much money—have dramatically decreased or failed altogether with the introduction of poker machines. Be that as it may, the Endeavour Foundation in Queensland has a budget of around \$100 million. About one-third of that, \$35 million or so, comes from Commonwealth or state government funds. The rest has to be raised by the Endeavour Foundation itself. It does that through the wonderful services of so many of its voluntary board members, its honorary helpers and its volunteers who work for the Endeavour Foundation.

The service is absolutely magnificent. I do not know what we would do without it in Toowoomba or indeed the rest of Queensland. Some 220 services throughout the state are provided by the Endeavour Foundation. This saves governments the need to fund in totality so many of these services.

Many of the parents of these children with disabilities are ageing. For many families there is nowhere for their children to go or nothing for them to do once they reach 17 or 18 and they finish school. What lies ahead for them? In cases where the disability is severe it is going to Endeavour to work in the factory, on the farm or in the nursery. They have the happiness and enjoyment of somewhere to go and the discipline of turning up on time and having friends at work. They get some training. They may develop skills to undertake an occupation. The family can also be happy that their son or daughter is doing this activity and is being cared for by the organisers of Endeavour who give so much of their time and talent to make this happen.

The member for Cunningham and I had a meeting with Mr Peter Short, the state chairman of Endeavour Foundation. I was impressed by him. He has given up some of his time. He was a successful legal practitioner in a major firm for some time. Now that he has some time he has given it to the Endeavour Foundation at the request of some people. He and his fellow board members and the regional board members have a difficult time ahead. The annual report will show that, whilst the organisation has a budget of around \$100 million, it is around \$5 million short per year and it cannot go on making these losses.

I was pleased to hear the contribution by the minister this morning. I wrote to him last Friday asking him if there is anything he could possibly do for the Endeavour farm and nursery in Toowoomba. I am

pleased Mr Short, the chairman of Endeavour, has given us an assurance that it will endeavour to buy another farm to replace the one that it unfortunately has to sell.

Time expired.