



Speech by

Peta-Kaye Croft

MEMBER FOR BROADWATER

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CYCLING SAFETY

Mrs CROFT (Broadwater—ALP) (6.44 p.m.): On 25 August this year the nation watched Queensland triathlete Loretta Harrop run the race of her life at the Athens Olympics. Loretta attacked the torturous triathlon course with strength, determination and courage. She also carried with her in her heart and mind the memory of her brother, Luke. Luke died after being hit by a car while training on the Gold Coast in 2002. It was Luke to whom she dedicated her silver Olympic medal win. Loretta, who is often seen training at the Runaway Bay Sports Super Centre and around the Gold Coast, is greatly admired for her strength of character and sportsmanship, and I congratulate her on winning Olympic silver.

Today I ask honourable members and the public to once again get behind Loretta by supporting her and her father Russell's commitment to campaigning for the safety of cyclists and triathletes. This 'Watch for Cyclists' sticker which I will distribute to members this week was developed by Steve Southwell to raise the awareness of cyclists using our roads. Its black and yellow print sends a simple reminder message that cyclists are on our roads, too. Loretta and Russell are asking people to purchase a sticker online at www.watchforcyclists.com and be part of a campaign to encourage respect for cyclists using our roads and raise awareness of the need for drivers to be cautious of cyclists by displaying the sticker on the back windows of cars. The money raised through the sale of the stickers goes towards victims of road cycle accidents and the cost is \$55 for 100 stickers.

Loretta's silver medal should serve as a reminder to us all that cyclists, whether they are recreational or professional, use our roads for training, keeping fit and healthy and achieving their dreams and therefore deserve our respect—the respect that is so evident in Europe where the Tour de France race has instilled in the people of that country a deep admiration for cyclists and their great achievements. According to Bicycle Queensland manager Ben Wilson, in 2003 there were seven cyclist fatalities on Queensland roads. This year to date, there have been six. All members will agree that every fatality is one too many.

I have spoken at length with cyclists in my electorate, and some of their experiences of riding on our roads that they have shared with me are frightening. I have been told of drivers deliberately slowing down to grab a cyclist's handlebars, oblivious to the intimidation and danger that they present to the sometimes junior cyclists just out for a training ride or recreational enjoyment. I know that shared roads mean shared responsibility, and I encourage all cyclists to wear a helmet and obey the road rules. But I stand here today in this House to call on all Queenslanders to change their attitudes, to slow down on our roads and to be patient and considerate. Please display the 'Watch for Cyclists' stickers and help raise awareness.