



Speech by

Paul Hoolihan

MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

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BEEF AUSTRALIA 2006

Mr HOOLIHAN (Keppel—ALP) (12.09 pm): It is well known that in 2005 this House sat in Rockhampton. That was a major coup for central Queensland. The flow-on effects of that sitting could only be eclipsed by an event which moved Rockhampton, the Capricorn Coast and the Fitzroy region to the world stage. I have the pleasure to tell members that Beef Australia 2006, which ran from 1 May to 7 May in Rockhampton and which has just concluded, has done just that. The cattle industry and suppliers of necessary ancillary products to the industry, such as horse equipment, veterinary products, finance and insurance, the major schools, which are the education facilities for so many people who live in comparative isolation to provide the beef and other products which flow from our cattle industry, and the sponsors, such as the Commonwealth government, the Queensland government, the ANZ Bank, the Rockhampton City Council and smaller sponsors and supporters can hold their heads up proudly for having faith in this major event.

As a demonstration of commitment to this event, Rydge's Capricorn International Resort built a two-storey marquee to house an international lounge and a fully functioning restaurant for the event. One of the pavilions was a full marquee with air conditioning. The cost must have been enormous but such was the faith of the community organisations in Beef Australia 2006.

At one stage during the past three years there was a suggestion that this event should move to Toowoomba. I say to anyone who would suggest that today that they must have had rocks in their head to consider moving Beef Australia 2006 from the undoubted beef capital of Australia, Rockhampton.

The electorate of Rockhampton, which is fearlessly represented by the Hon. Robert Schwarten, my electorate of Keppel and the electorate of Fitzroy, which is represented by Jim Pearce, cover some of our major beef producing areas. Producers from around the world came to Beef Australia 2006 to see the cream of our industry. They provided a valuable economic boost to the area. Together with those other two members, I was pleased to be an ambassador for Beef Australia 2006.

An estimated 600 overseas beef producers stayed in the region and enjoyed the delights of the Capricornia area. We want to build on that for Beef Australia 2009. I pay particular compliments and give congratulations to the board of management of Beef Australia Ltd, especially their livewire chairman, Geoff Murphy. By the time the closing ceremony was held, Geoff must have been the most tired man in Queensland, because he never stopped for the whole week. That was only for that week. He had been on the go for three years prior to that.

It has been a great pleasure to work with Geoff to promote Beef Australia 2006 and I look forward to any further promotion of Beef Australia. He will have my full support. Geoff has been ably supported by his management team of vice-chairs Chris Todd and Blair Angus, secretary Ian Weigh, treasurer John Croaker and Alice Greenup, Angus Adnam, Geoff Maynard, Ray Slasberg and Brett Prosser.

Despite the success of the week, it was tinged with sadness. On Sunday, 7 May Ray Slasberg lost his fight with cancer. He certainly worked hard to contribute to the success of the event despite his illness. He also worked to develop Australia's beef industry. He was a driving force behind the Australian Livestock Industries Development Corporation, which was established to pursue high value-adding to animal

coproducts and biactives, which are highly sought after by the global pharmaceutical industry. He was also part of the Consolidated Meat Group's senior management team at the time of its closure in 2002. Even the union members who lost their jobs spoke highly of his integrity. I also worked with Ray to rejuvenate the Yeppoon Turf Club. His hard work and knowledge of his community will be sorely missed. To his wife, Amanda, and his family, I convey my condolences. I know that anyone who worked with or who knew Ray will also express their sorrow at his passing.

The work of the members of the Beef Australia 2006 committee could not have translated to the success of Beef Australia 2006 without the hard work of the administration staff, Heather Clelland and Noel Landry. Noel was so committed to his work that he was not present at the birth of his newest child during the week. Heather and Noel would have been pleased with the success of Beef Australia 2006 for which they worked so hard. I congratulate them on a job well done.

It was great to see a large number of people who live in comparative isolation to raise our estimated beef cattle herd of 23 million come together for the benefit of their industry. They came in their hundreds and their thousands. Also, visitors from overseas came to the event. An instance of support that the event received from overseas entities was the holding of the World Braford Conference at Rydges Capricorn International Resort during the week.

No-one could get accommodation anywhere in Rockhampton, on the Capricorn Coast or at Gracemere as accommodation was booked out for Beef Australia 2006. People were even renting private houses because of the number of people who came for this major event. Because of the hard work of a number of people, including many behind the scenes, Beef Australia 2006 was an unqualified success. I know that most—if not all—of our overseas visitors will return to their own countries with great memories of their visit and, hopefully, they will want to return to Rockhampton, the Capricorn Coast and the Fitzroy region. I say: well done.

Time expired.