



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Friday, 26 May 2006

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Cyclone Larry, Benefit Concert

Hon. PD BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (8.33 am): It was disappointing yesterday to have to report to the community that plans for a major fundraising concert for the victims of Tropical Cyclone Larry in Brisbane had to be abandoned. It was always going to be hard to bring together top deck acts in a very short time and to find a date that was free at Suncorp Stadium and which allowed the majority of performers to attend. I know that some people in Innisfail were disappointed, but I think they should take a lot of comfort from the enormous support Australians have shown them—and our community has put its money where its heart is—donating nearly \$19 million to get the people's lives back to normal as quickly as possible. That excludes the hundreds of millions of dollars being put in by the Commonwealth and state governments. I highlight again that the rent that would otherwise have been forgone for that concert will now be donated—\$250,000—to that relief appeal. While I have the opportunity, I want to urge everyone affected by the cyclone to make an application for assistance from the fund. Application forms are widely available and the second round of grants is now under consideration.

Today I am proud to announce that the enormous display of support for the communities devastated by Cyclone Larry is continuing. I am pleased, on behalf of all involved, to announce that Dairy Farmers and their long standing goodwill ambassador, John Farnham, are to hold a fundraising concert at the Cairns Convention Centre on 16 June. Dairy Farmers and John Farnham are putting on the concert to raise funds for the victims of Cyclone Larry—100 per cent of the proceeds from tickets sales will go directly to those affected. Dairy Farmers has asked me to declare this a Premier's Benefit Concert and I am very pleased to do so. Farmers helping farmers and the communities that support them is a worthy initiative. It has my full support, and I have agreed to their request.

I congratulate Dairy Farmers and John Farnham on their initiative. Tickets for the concert go on sale next Tuesday through Ticketlink outlets. I know that the people of Cairns will be lining up to hand over their \$23 to see one of Australia's most loved performers. The proceeds will be distributed through the Dairy Farmers Creating Greener Pastures program, a fundraising initiative established in 2005 by Dairy Farmers to give something back to the rural and regional communities in which it operates. John Farnham and Dairy Farmers have raised a quarter of a million dollars for the Creating Greener Pastures program to help communities facing challenges like those currently confronting parts of far-north Queensland. I again congratulate Dairy Farmers and John Farnham on the concert and urge the community in Cairns to turn out in force on 16 June.