



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR INALA

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NATIONAL YOUTH WEEK

Ms PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (9.46 pm): This week is National Youth Week. It is a time when we can recognise the achievements and aspirations of our young people. Last Saturday I had the honour of being invited to address the state conference of young people who are members of the Church of Latter-day Saints. I would also like to acknowledge that my parliamentary colleague the member for Mount Ommaney also attended. I would like to congratulate the organisers of the church who organised a state youth conference for over 1,200 young people. The Church of Latter-day Saints brought together young people from all around Queensland, from as far north as Cairns. At the conference, I addressed the young people on three main issues: firstly, climate change; secondly, youth engagement; and, thirdly, community service.

The young people were very interested in my comments about climate change. At the end of last week, I along with the member for Ashgrove attended a national climate law conference in Canberra. The purpose of the conference was to discuss what laws Australia will need to implement to combat climate change over the next 10 years to minimise the impact of global warming.

Climate change affects everyone. Last month the United Kingdom introduced a bill to reduce their emissions by 60 per cent by 2020. Canada, one week later, introduced a similar draft bill. In Australia, the premiers met for COAG in Canberra on Friday and put forward a proposal to reduce Australia's emissions by 60 per cent by 2050—consistent with the UK and Canada. This was rejected by the Howard government.

Be under no illusion: young people are very aware of this issue and they will look to the different parties to see how they plan to combat climate change in the lead-up to the federal election. It should never be underestimated how important climate change is for young people.

The second issue I raised was in relation to youth engagement. Young people today face their future in a society which is becoming increasingly complex. A key process that this state government has to engage with young people is the Queensland Youth Council. These young people are able to give advice to the minister for communities so he and the government can better understand their concerns.

The third issue that I raised was community service. Project Love and Care was started by two remarkable women in Inala, Ann George and Jean Thomas. The aim of Project Love and Care is to provide kits for young children about to enter the child protection system. These kits provide items such as colouring books, journals, toiletry items, soft toys, socks, pyjamas and underwear. As part of the conference, 1,200 young people packed over 500 kits in a couple of hours. I am pleased to inform the House that Project Love and Care recently received a state government award for National Foster Carers Week recognising its outstanding contribution and work.

In conclusion, I would like to pay tribute to the work of the Church of Latter-day Saints and their strength in bringing together so many young people from throughout Queensland for this remarkable three-day conference.