



Speech by

**Hon. Kerry Shine**

**MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA NORTH**

Hansard Wednesday, 18 April 2007

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## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### 2006 Queensland Election Statistical Returns

**Hon. KG SHINE** (Toowoomba North—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister Assisting the Premier in Western Queensland) (10.14 am): I table the Electoral Commission of Queensland's report of statistical returns for the 2006 state election.

*Tabled paper:* Report by Electoral Commission Queensland titled 'Statistical Returns 2006 Queensland Election 2006'.

The state election, held on 9 September last year, was the 52nd general election of the members of the Queensland Legislative Assembly. As honourable members know, the result of the election was the Australian Labor Party, 59 seats; the Nationals, 17 seats; the Liberal Party, eight seats; One Nation, one seat; and Independents, four seats. At that election, 2.24 million votes were cast—more votes than were cast in 2004.

However, despite these extra votes, voter turnout last year was slightly lower than the 2004 poll. There were 2.48 million people enrolled to vote at the time of the last election—1.29 million female electors and 1.19 million male electors. The Electoral Commission undertook a comprehensive electoral information and awareness campaign, including a mail-out of information personally addressed and posted to each voter on the roll. Votes were cast at 1,687 static polling booths, 239 prepoll centres and 570 declared institution mobile polling booths. There were 8,400 polling officials and three remote area mobile polling teams.

A concern I have is the disengagement of young Australians from our electoral processes. At the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General meeting in Canberra late last week, I sought and received support for a national summit aimed at increasing the civic involvement and voter enrolment of young Australians—and, of course, this is National Youth Week. Importantly, a representative group of youth ambassadors from across the country would be invited to attend and participate in the summit.

It is estimated that more than 300,000 young Australians eligible to be enrolled to vote do not appear on the electoral roll. I believe the 'Voices and votes' report, released by the Queensland parliament's Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee—LCARC—last year, and other studies will be very instructive for the summit. The committee's report found that only 49 per cent of 18-year-olds in Australia were enrolled to vote at the end of the last financial year. In Queensland, the rate was even lower at 42 per cent. An effective democracy must encourage its citizens of all ages to be informed and engaged.