



Speech by

**Ted Malone**

**MEMBER FOR MIRANI**

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## **STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE VOLUNTEERS**

**Mr MALONE** (Mirani—NPA) (11.53 am): The Bligh government talks loud and long about SES workers and what a great job they do, and we on this side of the House are no less enthusiastic. But in truth, members opposite are doing all they can to destroy hundreds of small volunteer SES groups around the state.

Labor's forced council amalgamations are destroying small communities. For example, in my own electorate the township of St Lawrence will become a ghost town when the jobs of the local council workers are destroyed and the families move to find work. Labor does not understand that most local council workers are also local SES volunteers, and when the council jobs go so will the SES volunteers. It is fine for the minister to come into the House wearing an orange tie, but it is a real shame that he will not work a bit harder for the survival of our local SES groups in towns such as St Lawrence, Nebo, Sarina, Glendon and Sarina Beach. His government's contribution of \$3,000 to meet the costs of training and equipment is a pittance, and those costs have to be subsidised heavily by local governments.

With climate change, we are constantly being warned to expect more extreme and severe weather conditions—more fires, storms, cyclones and floods. The Premier has given her husband a highly paid job as head of the climate change department. That is great for the Bligh household, but what a shame that she will not show some heart for the likes of St Lawrence and Nebo, where local council jobs are being destroyed and along with them our local SES services. Who is going to be there to help our residents when the extreme weather events hit our small towns, because under the Premier's plans there will not be any SES volunteers?