



Speech by
Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Wednesday, 20 May 2009

HUSH FOR HOMELESSNESS APPEAL

Ms GRACE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (9.31 pm): I am sure members would all agree that there are many people who would pay to silence a politician even for just an hour. Well, I had the pleasure last Friday of being silent for one hour when I participated in the Mission Australia HUSH for Homelessness appeal. HUSH for Homelessness symbolises the 'invisible' and 'voiceless' lives that homeless Australians lead. I was one of 150 HUSH for Homelessness heroes, who included the Queensland Firebirds, the Queensland Roar, the Hon. Karen Struthers, former test cricketer Michael Kasproicz and Councillor David Hinchliffe.

Ms Spence: And was it very hard for you?

Ms GRACE: Well, I do not know how the other heroes went, but my supporters were obviously pretty keen to keep me quiet as my sponsorship raised over \$1,000, even though my target was only \$500. In fact, the total raised by Mission Australia nationwide currently stands at over \$70,000. This was a wonderful opportunity for me to help provide awareness and much-needed funding for the voiceless people in our community. All donations go directly to Mission Australia homeless services, providing crisis and transitional accommodation and support services to homeless people across the country.

Tragically, almost 105,000 Australians have no place to call home. Of these people, 10,000 are children under 12, which I find an almost unbelievable statistic. The year 2009 marks the 150th year Mission Australia has been working with disadvantaged Australians. It shares its birthday with Queensland. Mission Australia provides vital services to the homeless and disadvantaged in my electorate such as Cafe One on Wickham Street in Fortitude Valley—which was recently renovated and reopened—where people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness can access a range of services, including low-cost meals, referrals, flexible and informal case management, crisis counselling and advocacy.

Roma House in Spring Hill—another Mission Australia operated facility funded by the Queensland government—provides a 24-hour intensive support base for the state's homeless men, women and families, helping them transition from the streets to a more independent, sustainable and safe mode of living. I would very much like to congratulate Mission Australia for the excellent and worthwhile work it does in my electorate and throughout Queensland. I thank all my supporters and all the sponsors who donated so generously to assist in the vital work of Mission Australia.

I am positive that they thought paying to keep me quiet for an hour, even though they may have thought it was impossible, was money well spent. The money goes to a great cause, and I think more politicians next year should sign up to help the homeless and participate in the HUSH for Homelessness that Mission Australia runs nation-wide.