



Speech by

Hon. Annastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

National Week of Deaf People

Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs) (9.58 am): Next week is National Week of Deaf People. This is a week-long celebration which recognises the achievements of the deaf community. I would like to acknowledge here in the gallery today representatives from Deaf Services Queensland and the state's deaf community. I am also very pleased to see interpreters in the gallery translating today's parliamentary proceedings. I look forward to meeting representatives of Queensland's deaf community at a morning tea here at Parliament House.

The Bligh government provides Deaf Services Queensland with \$1.4 million to support deaf and hearing impaired Queenslanders. Deaf Services Queensland provides them with vital resources, including computers, specialised fire alarms and in-home accommodation support. It also delivers learning and life skills development and a state-wide information and referral service.

In April this year I officially launched Deaf Services Queensland in Townsville. The local deaf community sent us a very clear message about the need for a local service. We listened, and we delivered. We now provide Deaf Services Queensland with \$147,000 a year to employ a full-time community worker and a part-time translator in Townsville, and I want to thank all of the Townsville members of parliament for their very strong advocacy to deliver this service. Earlier this year I announced an extra \$300,000 for interpreting and translating services in Queensland's deaf and multicultural communities. The SWITC program helps to link these communities to government and community services through braille, Auslan and language interpreters. Members of Queensland's deaf community can also use Auslan online through the Department of Communities website to have their say on the government's draft 10-year plan for disability services. The deaf community has been well represented at the 18 Shared Visions conferences so far held across the state. Each of these forums has featured an Auslan interpreter, giving deaf people a chance to have their say on our 10-year plan. We practice what we preach.

In conclusion, I want to encourage Queenslanders to celebrate National Week of Deaf People and ensure the local deaf community of the Bligh government's ongoing support.