



Speech by


## Dr Mark Robinson

MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND

Hansard Thursday, 13 October 2011

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### NORTH STRADBROKE ISLAND, MARINE STATION

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Cleveland—LNP) (12.22 am): The marine environment of Moreton Bay is important. Tonight I want to acknowledge the work of the University of Queensland marine station and the work of Dr Kathy and Dr Kevin Townsend, who are engaged in vital research from the UQ marine station at Dunwich, North Stradbroke Island. Importantly, this facility combines both research and field based education.

On 30 September Andrew Powell, the shadow minister for the environment, and I visited the station to look at how we can better support both the marine education and the marine research aspects of the work done there. One issue that I was keen to get a better understanding of was the impacts of various plastics, particularly plastic bags, on turtles. Often turtles that become injured or die do so as a result of ingesting various plastics, particularly plastic bags.

Dr Kathy and Dr Kevin are doing very important work in researching various types of plastic bags, particularly the biodegradable type, and looking at the time frame over which these plastic bags degrade, both in the bellies of the turtles and in the ocean. They are looking at what products are safer and how we can move away from the more dangerous products to safer ones. I commend them for the work they are doing.

Another pet topic of the marine station is the work that Dr Kathy does with manta rays. She is an authority on them in Australia. During the 2010 UQ marine station open week, I was most impressed by a PhD student who presented her work on tiger sharks. It was some of the best work in the world.

I would like to see the facility on the island expand to meet the growing demand for marine study and research, an area dear to my heart. As a graduate of the University of Queensland, I want to congratulate them on their role in fostering learning and understanding about marine life. As the local MP for the station, I also thank the university for their role in this facility.

In terms of its future, I would like to encourage the expansion of the facility. There are all kinds of opportunities to broaden the economic base for North Stradbroke Island to add to its small business, ecotourism and EPA award winning and environmentally sensitive sandmining that occurs on the island. I would like to encourage the development of the research station as a centre for education which would complement the growth of tourism which is going to be needed. Residents support the UQ station. It has certainly become enmeshed in the community and is very important. I would like to congratulate again Kathy and Kevin.

*(Time expired)*