



Speech by


# Hon. Campbell Newman

MEMBER FOR ASHGROVE

Hansard Tuesday, 15 May 2012

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## ELECTION OF SPEAKER

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (10.49 am): Honourable members, the role of parliamentary Speaker is respected and admired and is a role steeped in history. By formal definition, a Speaker is elected to preside over sittings and to maintain orderly proceedings. The Speaker sets the tone, calls the shots and refs the rulings, and if you see them on their feet you know they are not impressed.

Since the formation of the first Queensland parliament in 1860, 35 Speakers have presided over this Assembly, most recently the former member for Logan, the Hon. John Mickel. Often praised for his fairness, firmness, patience and integrity, his service was a great credit to the role. On behalf of all members of the 53rd Parliament, I acknowledge the contribution of the former member for Logan in the role of Speaker.

Just like the immediate past Speaker, whilst all 35 former Speakers brought to the role different qualities and personalities, they all had one thing in common: they were men. In 1986 the federal parliament elected its first female Speaker of the House of Representatives and almost 20 years later the Victorian parliament did the same. Today it gives me great pleasure to nominate the member for Maroochydore as the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Queensland parliament's first female Speaker.

The member for Maroochydore was born in a bush nursing hospital at Sea Lake in the semi-arid Victorian Mallee region to a pioneer family. I actually know where Sea Lake is, having been in the grain industry. With our nominee at the age of three, the family—parents Gordon and Norma, along with three siblings—chose to become Queenslanders when they moved to the Sunshine Coast in 1968. There, the member attended Cooroy and Yandina primary schools and later Nambour State High School, one of our fine state schools which has educated numerous senior politicians from across the political spectrum.

Harbouring a love of language, the Speaker elect lived in Japan as a Rotary exchange student and later majored in Japanese language at university. This overseas experience created an advocate of the importance of Australian students learning foreign languages, both to contribute to bridges of cultural understanding and to develop our economic strengths. Whilst a passion for music also featured in early years, the member chose to pursue a career in journalism, allowing her to exercise her other creative love: writing. It was a choice that saw her awarded the state Dalgety Excellence in Rural Journalism Award in 1989.

The member for Maroochydore won the newly created seat in 1992, cementing her first record milestone: the youngest woman elected to the Queensland parliament. Her approach to public life has been influenced by both her parents and the example they set of service above self—the member's father having served in the Queensland parliament between 1974 and 1989 as the member for Cooroora and her mother as a former nurse.

Her understanding of the diversity and size of this great state has come about through many years and thousands of kilometres travelled meeting with ordinary Queenslanders through shadow ministry roles for health, transport, main roads, tourism, small business, communities, housing and women, to name just

a few. It is her reputation for hard work and diligent service for her electorate of Maroochydore, the Sunshine Coast and, indeed, all Queenslanders that has seen her re-elected eight times.

Honourable members, the 54th Parliament has serious and significant business ahead. Our nominee for Speaker is committed to restoring the powers and authority of the role, to truly return to the Office of the Speaker the independence it requires to execute its crucial functions—and that is about leadership. We must work dutifully and responsibly to improve the lives of the people of Queensland. In this work we must all take personal responsibility for maintaining—indeed exceeding—the standards expected of all of us. I have full confidence that, as the custodian of our conduct, the honourable member for Maroochydore will assist, support and guide us while holding us to high account. We must rebuild ourselves as a parliament in which the people of Queensland can be proud. The member for Maroochydore subscribes to the motto of service above self, the ideal quality to have in a parliamentary Speaker. I commend the member for Maroochydore as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.