




Speech by

Desley Scott

MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE

Hansard Thursday, 12 July 2012

SU'A, MR V

 **Mrs SCOTT** (Woodridge—ALP) (3.13 pm): Today I wish to deliver a message to this House of the sad loss of Su'a Vai'Vas'A Popo Su'a, Paramount Chief of our Samoan community since 1964. His death has deeply affected the Samoan community here in Australia, New Zealand and Samoa. Su'a's passing has brought sadness to members of other Pacific island nations as well as to our community in general. Su'a was a great leader and friend to the Logan community and beyond. My office enjoyed a long and close association with him—in particular Sandy, my electorate officer, whom he assisted on so many occasions. He was a kind, gentle servant to his people, a man of great faith, humble and caring, but most of all a devoted husband to Fa'Amomoi, father and grandfather to many bright and gifted young adults and children, brother to his siblings and part of an extended family.

Su'a was born on 15 June 1936 in Samoa. He migrated to New Zealand in 1960 and arrived in Australia in 1995. He became a deacon for the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in New Zealand in 1972 and had that honour bestowed on him here in Queensland in 2010. He and his wife became the first Polynesians to establish a Samoan childcare centre in Australia, right in the heart of Logan City, and it was here that my office enjoyed a very close association with them. I recall the joyous opening of the centre and the beautiful voices of the young children. However, it was often the case that Su'a needed to represent his people in court, and this gave him great enthusiasm to ensure children and young people were instructed in their culture and parents received guidance. He was always a great father figure within the Pacific Islander community and on many occasions linked with the wider community and our Logan City Council. Sadly, their son Michael passed away unexpectedly in recent years.

Su'a was a man of vision, always active in so many aspects of community life. It was a shock to us all to hear that he had suffered a massive health event on 26 June at his home from which he did not recover consciousness. We gathered with a large number of family and friends at the Congregational Samoan Church at Willawong to farewell one of God's true gentlemen with the beautiful harmony of Islander voices raised in song, the traditional draping of his coffin in lovingly prepared coverings and the specially prepared floral tributes. It was my very real privilege to take part with Va'a Alofipo, Josephine and Tracy representing Woodridge high. We heard many tributes to this wonderful man. Rest in peace, dear friend, Su'a. You have left a very big hole in our hearts.