



Speech by


# Hon. Fiona Simpson

**MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE**

Hansard Thursday, 29 November 2012

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## VALEDICTORY

 **Madam SPEAKER:** In the tradition of our valedictory speeches at the end of the parliamentary year we pause to reflect on the year, to thank all who have supported us and to celebrate our common humanity. This year we have seen an election with 51 new MPs, a change of government, an apology to those who suffered due to forced adoption and also the sad passing of Eric Deeral, our state's first and only Indigenous MP. There is much in Eric Deeral's story that can instruct us as to how lucky we are to serve in this place, to have the right to vote, the right to agree or to disagree and to strive for a better future. His story is an inspiration: overcoming significant disadvantage to win a seat by popular election only nine years after Indigenous Queenslanders were allowed to vote.

This year, with Mr Deeral's permission before his passing, we named the Indigenous youth parliament after him and were privileged to have him present for the youth parliament in this very chamber. I am proud that together with the community engagement section of the parliament we could film this event and capture it for prosperity to perhaps inspire other young people about a true servant leader.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to all who have contributed to the workings of the Queensland parliament this year in what has been a busy and an interesting year. I wish to thank our electorate office staff, Hansard, the Clerk and Table Office staff and senior management, cleaning and all House staff—property services, catering, gardening, our sergeant-at-arms, security, attendants, community engagement, library, IT, committee staff. As people know, so many more help us do our jobs as members of parliament, not least of all, as has been mentioned, our families—the people who know us best and still support us.

I particularly want to thank the Premier and the government members, the Leader of the Opposition and ALP members for their cooperation in regard to the operations of this place; the Independent members—I particularly acknowledge Liz Cunningham; and also the Katter Australian Party and other Independent members. We have the privilege of serving in an extraordinary workplace. It is an honour to serve with you in this parliament.

As we look to Christmas I wish each member and all those listening my very best wishes for this season of peace and goodwill. I also acknowledge the parliamentary media gallery. While they are not staff of the parliament, they do play a very important role. We work extraordinary hours, and they sometimes get to experience the crazy hours that we tend to enjoy. I trust that each of us will have moments in which we can pause and reflect upon the opportunities that we are fortunate to experience in this great state of Queensland. I also trust that we will look forward to the New Year with a heart to help those around us, particularly those in need.

As the sitting year draws to a close, we have a tradition where members help serve Parliamentary Service staff at an end-of-year function in order to thank them for their work throughout the year. This function will begin after the valedictory speeches and the adjournment and will be held in the Speaker's Hall. I invite members, parliamentary staff and members of the parliamentary media gallery who are still present to this evening's function.