




Speech by

Peter Wellington

MEMBER FOR NICKLIN

Hansard Tuesday, 21 August 2012

CARAVAN PARKS

 **Mr WELLINGTON** (Nicklin—Ind) (12.29 pm): I rise to join with the Leader of the Opposition in speaking out for some of the most vulnerable people in the community. I am proud to say that I will stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the Leader of the Opposition in fighting for the people that this government does not want to listen to. As we speak, hundreds of fires are outside protesting against this very government. I bet that many of them voted for this government in the last election. Many of the people in our retirement villages and our government caravan parks voted for this government. If we had an election tomorrow I wonder what that vote would be.

I am standing here to fight the fight for the people in our government caravan parks because the government is not listening. I believe we as members of parliament have a duty of care to look after the most vulnerable people in our community no matter what the budget bottom line is. This morning the minister responsible claimed these caravan parks are being run as commercial caravan parks and will be sold as commercial caravan parks. The minister is in the chamber at the moment. My advice is that the Woombye caravan park is managed and operated to provide affordable accommodation for people on a limited budget. That may mean, in someone else's terminology, being run as a commercial caravan park, but the fact is that the Woombye caravan park is managed and operated to provide affordable accommodation for people on a limited budget.

I want to quote from letters presented to me from people from the Glass House electorate and the Woombye caravan park. I table these letters.

Tabled paper: Correspondence in relation to the proposed sale of government owned caravan parks [\[746\]](#).

They are from Ray Smith, Lloyd Blake, Morris Clarke, Neil Stevenson, Karen and Adam Gustafson, Byron Webb and Maxine Stone, A Dunstan and Kim Mostran. I want to read some extracts for the benefit of members whom I urge to take the time to go and visit these three caravan parks. One letter says—

I have been living in this park on the site in my own caravan with hard annex for the last 9 years. I moved here because the park I was living in at the time was put on the market. The owners here at the time were happy to have me stay here, but there was always the worry the park would sell and I would have to move again. The park did sell but it was the government bought it.

We, the residents, were assured that we would be safe here for the rest of our days, because they had said that the Government had bought the park for cheap housing so it couldn't be sold for development and we would be secure. It would appear that the Government 'That I voted for' are sacrificing people's lives and homes for Koala's.

If the latest news is accurate (\$25,000,000 for land for Koala habitat) thank you LNP. I, like most of the other residents in these parks are here mainly because we can't afford to move.

I would love to live in a nice house or fancy retirement village, but life doesn't always go as planned, so we have to make the best of what we have.

Mr Powell interjected.

Mr WELLINGTON: I am not taking interjections from the minister for the environment. I listened to him in silence. Please listen to me in silence. To quote further from the letter—

'I have a great idea—I will come and live with you and then you can sell the Park—or perhaps I will have to learn to eat gum leaves and go and live with the Koalas.

Thanks for making us feel so important.

An extract from another letter states—

Many of us residents (including me) are old and unwell and the stress is making us sicker. Your decision is killing us.

We are all stressed about having to move. There is a shortage of low cost accommodation which your action is making worse. We are unable to pay for a move, removal costs etc.

I note that earlier this morning the minister said, 'Don't worry. We will look after you.'

Mr STEVENS: I ask that the member table the document he is quoting from.

Mr WELLINGTON: I have tabled the documents. My advice to the Manager of Government Business is to read them. The government knows that after these parks are sold and 18 months has passed the new owner would be able to apply to the local council for a change of use. That is a fact. Once the term of the current 12-month lease expires there is no certainty that there will not be a significant increase in rent for the people who want to stay on this site in Woombye. I believe that the decision to sell these three caravan parks is heartless.

(Time expired)