




Speech By
Annastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

BAIRD, CORPORAL SC, MOTION TO TAKE NOTE

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (9.42 am): I echo the Premier's sentiments this morning. I rise in this House to pay tribute to Corporal Cameron Baird who was the 40th Australian soldier to lose his life in Afghanistan when he was killed by insurgents on 22 June this year whilst serving with the Australian Special Operations Task Group. Corporal Baird was from the 2nd Commando Regiment based at Holsworthy Barracks in Sydney, New South Wales.

He has been described by his family as a 'very humble man and a straight shooter, who told you what he thought but never held a grudge'. His colleagues described him as 'an outstanding special forces soldier.' This is evidenced by his receipt of the Medal for Gallantry awarded for gallantry in action during close-quarters combat in Afghanistan on Operation Slipper.

The description of his conduct during this operation, which was a clearance and search mission of a Taliban stronghold, illustrates the qualities that exemplify the conduct of so many Australian soldiers who have gone before him. His tenacity and courage under fire, the leadership he displayed and his composure were an example to all men who served with him.

Corporal Baird gave the ultimate sacrifice for his family, his friends, his comrades and his country. Even those of us who have never had the privilege of meeting him are changed forever for having known of his bravery and sacrifice. We owe a debt of gratitude not only to Corporal Baird and his family but to the 39 soldiers before him who have lost their lives in Afghanistan. We also owe a debt of gratitude to all Australian soldiers who have served and who are still serving in Afghanistan. We pledge today, as we do on every Anzac Day—we will remember them.