



Speech by


## Hon. Fiona Simpson

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

Hansard Tuesday, 12 February 2013

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### MOTION: NATURAL DISASTER EVENTS OF 2013

 **Madam SPEAKER:** I speak to support the condolence motion. As a state MP, like my parliamentary colleagues I think of the entire state, a state of great expanse filled with men and women of great determination in the midst of great devastation in so many areas. Though the members of state parliament may hold diverse political opinions, at times like this such opinions are put aside so that we can together focus on responding during crisis and providing comfort to those who have lost so much.

Our heart is heavy for those who have lost livelihoods or who find themselves once again having to battle against the odds to see an agricultural or commercial business survive such a hit. We mourn with those who have lost homes and who have also endured seeing memories and special mementoes swept away or destroyed. The loss of tangible symbols can weigh heavily. It can leave people feeling unanchored or adrift, isolated from their past and unsure of their future.

Particularly we grieve with those who have experienced the greatest loss of all, the loss of loved ones. Our hearts broke with the news of each death and the loss of a child is perhaps the saddest of all. My local electorate of Maroochydore was fortunate to escape the worst of the flooding from ex-Tropical Cyclone Oswald with only relatively minor damage experienced in local areas except for some extensive shoreline damage. However, many in my electorate and across the Sunshine Coast were impacted by loss of electricity supply with an unprecedented number of homes and businesses losing power across South-East Queensland. Crops in the hinterland also suffered greatly.

I recognise the diligent efforts of hardworking Energex teams to restore power as quickly as possible to the majority of homes and businesses. I wish to also acknowledge and thank the Minister for Transport in regard to urgent dredging work that was required on the river mouth of the Mooloolah River. The department of communities was quick to respond in providing emergency assistance information for those residents who were experiencing hardship.

As has been mentioned today, already the response of Queenslanders has been heartwarming and we all commend the tireless work of volunteers and the professionals. I continue to encourage individuals and organisations to donate financially to the flood appeal as far greater resources will be required to help those affected. To all my parliamentary colleagues who have been working so hard to bring relief and attend to the practical needs of their constituents, you have our ongoing support and thanks. Like each of you, I support this motion. My heart is with those who have experienced great loss and my prayer is that in the midst of the darkness of their grief they will find the light of hope and comfort.