




Speech By  
**Stephen Bennett**

**MEMBER FOR BURNETT**

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**ADJOURNMENT**

**Neville, Mr P**

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (10.57 pm): I rise to share my gratitude and congratulations to the federal member for Hinkler, Mr Paul Neville. Paul has been a great mentor and supporter and I appreciate the assistance in, firstly, getting me elected and his consequent support. Paul has announced his intention to retire from the federal political arena.

Paul Neville is married to his lovely wife, Margaret, who will have to find ways of adjusting to having Paul around a little more. Before entering parliament, Paul spent 20 years with the Bundaberg and District Tourism and Development Board as deputy chair and later as CEO. Paul took the federal seat of Hinkler from the ALP in 1993 with a swing of 4.8 per cent and he has won every election since then. The Hinkler electorate is traditionally one of the most marginal electorates in Australia and Paul is now the longest serving member for the electorate, after putting up tough fights at each election.

The Hinkler electorate has a good mix of urban and part-rural areas and is located in the Wide Bay region. After the electoral redistribution of 2009, it includes parts of the Fraser Coast Regional Council and the Bundaberg Regional Council, incorporating the cities of Bundaberg, Bargara, Hervey Bay and towns like Childers, Woodgate and Howard. Paul has been a National Party whip since October 1998 and while in government was the chair of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport and Regional Services and the Government Policy Committee on Communications and Information Technology. Paul currently chairs the Coalition Policy Committee on Education and Industry and is deputy chair of the House of Representatives Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government Committee. Paul Neville has a well-deserved reputation for strong and effective representation. On many occasions I have witnessed the respect that Paul gains from his peers and constituents and it is all well deserved. The most telling memory I will take away from knowing this great local member is the high esteem in which he is held on all sides of the political divide.

Paul has produced a number of high-profile reports on rail, road funding, shipping, regional aviation, racing services, fatigue in transport and radio services to regional Australia. Paul has taken a leading role on key issues for the electorate and for Australia, such as improving Medicare and local health services; making local key roads safe and maintained for all motorists; fixing television black spots in regional and remote areas; regulating media ownership and its diversity; enhancing the live and local nature of regional radio and TV; extending mobile telephone coverage and broadband services throughout regional Australia; standing up for fishing, pork and sugar and horticultural producers, including the current issues with the ginger and pineapple industries; battling to keep services in regional Australia; giving more entitlements to our much-deserving war veterans; and retaining a focus on public infrastructure.

Paul will be missed for the strength of his political experience and knowledge and his dedication to the electorate. We will all miss the wit and, in moments of need, the jokes—the frog joke, the students at the Torbinlea races and many more. I take this opportunity to personally wish Paul and his wife Margaret all the best in the endeavours they pursue knowing they have made the Hinkler electorate a better place. Paul and Margaret Neville, thank you.