



Speech By  
**Hon. Campbell Newman**

**MEMBER FOR ASHGROVE**

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Record of Proceedings, 25 November 2014

**MOTION OF CONDOLENCE**

**Goss, Mr WK**



**Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.35 am): I move—

1. That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered to this state by the late Wayne Keith Goss, a former member of the Parliament of Queensland, Premier of Queensland and Minister of the Crown.
2. That Madam Speaker be requested to convey to the family of the deceased gentleman the above resolution, together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the members of the Parliament of Queensland, in the loss they have sustained.

Wayne Keith Goss was born in Mundubbera on 26 February 1951 and after his family moved to Brisbane he was educated at the Inala state and high schools. Following his secondary education, Wayne studied at the University of Queensland and attained a law degree. In 1968, Wayne commenced work as a solicitor in private practice and in 1974 joined the Aboriginal Legal Service. He later became a partner in his own legal firm and was also involved with the Labor Lawyers Association, serving for a time as the association's president.

I note that Wayne's father was politically active in the Australian Labor Party, having founded the party's Inala branch. So perhaps it was inevitable that Wayne would seek to enter parliament one day. In 1983 Wayne was preselected by the ALP to contest the seat of Salisbury in this place. The member for Salisbury at that time was Rosemary Kyburz, who had held the seat for the Liberal Party since 1974. At the state election of October 1983 Wayne defeated Mrs Kyburz, and he took his place in this chamber as the new member for Salisbury. Upon entering the parliament, Wayne was immediately elevated to the opposition front bench, serving as opposition spokesman on lands, forestry and police. In May 1985 he became opposition spokesman on justice. I also note for the record that Wayne served as a member of the parliament's Privileges Committee from 1983 to 1987 and was a member of the Standing Orders Committee from 1988 to 1995.

Following an electoral redistribution in 1986, Wayne decided to contest the recreated seat of Logan, instead of Salisbury, at the 1986 state election. He was successfully elected to the seat of Logan at that state election and continued to serve in that seat until he decided to retire at the state election of June 1998, after having continually served for almost 15 years as a member of this House.

In March 1988, Wayne took over the leadership of the ALP from the then member for Sandgate, Nev Warburton, and also became Leader of the Opposition. Any student of Queensland's political history will know that these were interesting and dynamic times. Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen's long run of almost 20 years as Premier had not long come to an end, a new Premier, Mike Ahern, was in office and the Fitzgerald commission of inquiry was running.

In September 1989, Russell Cooper took over from Mike Ahern as Premier and on 2 November Premier Cooper visited the Governor to seek a dissolution of the Legislative Assembly for an election to be held on 2 December. After a hard-fought election campaign and under the strong leadership of Wayne the ALP was swept into office for the first time in 32 years. This, of course, must have been a particularly proud moment for Wayne and I am sure he relished the challenges ahead.

On 7 December 1989, Wayne was formally sworn in as Queensland's 34th Premier. He also took on the portfolios of minister for economic and trade development and minister for the arts. The Goss government was returned to office at the state elections of 1992 and 1995, albeit with only a one-seat majority in 1995.

Following a decision by the judge of the Court of Disputed Returns in December 1995, a new election for the electoral district of Mundingburra was ordered. The election was held on 3 February 1996, and the seat was won by Frank Tanti of the Liberal Party. This put the Goss government into minority and, following a decision by the then, and still current, member for Gladstone, a change of government took place, with Wayne resigning the premiership of Queensland on 19 February 1996. Rob Borbidge was sworn in as Premier, and on the following day the parliament voted its confidence in the new Borbidge government.

While changes of government can take place in Westminster systems without a general election, when one now looks back, that this was able to happen in Queensland in such a relatively smooth way is testament to Wayne Goss and the other political leaders of the time. I think that the words Rob Borbidge used about Wayne during that February 1996 confidence motion debate are quite instructive. When it comes to Wayne Goss, they point to the mark of the man. Rob Borbidge said of Wayne Goss—

At the outset, I would congratulate and personally thank the member for Logan for the manner in which he has conducted the ongoing processes of the transition of Government. Over recent days, he has fulfilled what are clearly unhappy duties with considerable dignity and considerable courtesy. I fully appreciate there are some within the member's own party who regret that he has not been politically more aggressive. I say to them that I share the member for Logan's view that both the office he has vacated, and the Parliament which underpinned his authority, has been better served by his statesmanlike approach. For that I thank him and wish him well in the future.

Wayne Goss was a true leader who guided Queensland through turbulent times not only upon taking office in 1989 but upon leaving office in 1996. He was—and I wholeheartedly believe this—a true statesman. In government he drove much needed reform in many aspects of Queensland's public life including social policy, electoral laws and reform of the Police Service and the broader Public Service. He did so with tenacity, determination and steely courage. These attributes were also very much at the forefront as he battled cancer so bravely over recent years.

After leaving the parliament, Wayne Goss carved out a highly successful business career. He also served for many years as Chairman of the Queensland Art Gallery Board of Trustees. Wayne's contribution to the arts in Queensland was immense.

Wayne's place in Queensland's history is assured. His contribution will never be forgotten. For the record, I firmly agree with his statement, or question, in 1996—Wayne Goss did leave Queensland a better place.

Wayne Keith Goss passed away on 10 November 2014 at the very young age of 63, and a public memorial service to celebrate his life was held at the Gallery of Modern Art, South Brisbane, on 21 November 2014. It was a fitting memorial service to celebrate Wayne's life, and it was my singular honour to have been in attendance.

I place on record the government's thanks for the years of service Wayne gave to the institutions of our democracy and to the Queensland community. On behalf of Queensland, I take this opportunity to extend my sympathy and that of this House to Wayne's wife, Roisin, their children, Ryan and Caitlin, and his other family and friends.