




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE

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MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Goss, Mr WK

 **Mrs D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (10.42 am): I rise to speak also to this condolence motion on the passing of the Hon. Wayne Goss and to pass on my condolences to his wife, Roisin, and their children, Caitlin and Ryan, and their broader family. Today, we have heard many define the character of this great man, but I think those words are best said by the person who knew him best, his wife, Roisin, who said at his memorial service that her late husband had 'utter dignity, grace and tenacity'. During his 17-year on-and-off battle with brain tumours, Wayne showed extraordinary courage, strength and determination. He never asked, 'Why me?' He was always extremely positive in his attitude, making the very best of his situation and enjoying the present. That is the worth of this man. That is his true character.

We all know, and we have heard again today, that Wayne had achieved so much as Premier of this state. We know that, for women, he did so much to break down barriers by introducing equal employment laws and antidiscrimination provisions. He also provided a judicial review for administrative decisions; introduced Queensland's first comprehensive gun licencing laws; abolished the imperial honours system; appointed Queensland's first female Governor, Leneen Forde; restored fairness to the electoral system by ending the gerrymander; and provided a fair, democratic electoral system that we still enjoy today. Those are just some of the very few achievements that Wayne left behind as his great legacy.

We know that Wayne Goss was a man who was driven by social justice and a strong social conscience. He believed that a modern legal system was necessary for our state and the system that we have today is part of that legacy. It is unrecognisable from some of the unjust and corrupt practices that were institutionalised during the Joh years. Wayne dedicated his legal training skills and experience to helping those most vulnerable, including those who were bullied and attacked by an unjust legal system.

Wayne brought that commitment and highly skilled legal mind into the parliament. In government he forged a new Public Service, a new legal system and a new police force that modern Queensland can be proud of. As my colleagues in their contributions to this condolence motion have pointed out, Wayne's contribution stretches across portfolios. His legacy is clear and lasting.

On a personal note, I also want to mention his family, Roisin, Ryan and Caitlin. Roisin also made a contribution to public life. She was committed to social justice in her own career and helped to reshape a modern Queensland. She contributed to many community organisations and charities. Those of us in politics who have our own families know how difficult it can be to balance work and family life. In addition to Wayne and Roisin's enormous contribution to public life, it should also be noted that one of their achievements was to raise two great children. As anyone who knows the family or those who were at the memorial will know, they are two articulate, generous, giving adults who are another important part of the legacy that Wayne Goss leaves behind.

Wayne Goss was a true leader who inspired many and his legacy will go on to inspire many more. Good people who want to act in the name of fairness and social justice. Labor members are so proud of the fact that they belong to a party where a man from such humble beginnings can end up holding the highest office in this state. He never let the trappings of high office change him. He did not join politics or go into politics for self-gratification; he did it for the greater good.

Just as Wayne Goss was inspired and spurred on to join the Labor Party because of Gough Whitlam's dismissal, his win in 1989 spurred many to get active in the Labor Party. Wayne was a true statesman. He has left Queensland a better place and he did do it his way. Queenslanders say thank you to the Goss family for sharing the Hon. Wayne Goss with us. He will be sadly missed.