




Speech By
Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

Record of Proceedings, 3 December 2015

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.37 pm): It gives me great pleasure to rise as Premier to speak in the address-in-reply debate. From the outset I would like to acknowledge the Governor for the speech that he made and also our Speaker, Peter Wellington.

I have had the privilege of representing the people of Inala in this place since 2006 and I can say quite honestly that it gets no less humbling as the years go by. I am always mindful of the trust and responsibility the people of the Inala electorate have placed in me to represent them and their best interests. It is something that drives me each and every day because I know how tough people can do it in their lives and the daily challenges that they face. Whether it is trying to find a dollar or two to pay the outstanding electricity bill or putting food on the table, people in my electorate do it tough, but they are resilient like Queenslanders right across the state. On reflection, what makes our state so great is its greatest asset, and that is our people. It does not matter whether it is the communities I go to or my own local electorate—walking around the old Inala Civic Centre or going up to Cairns, out to Yeppoon which was damaged by the cyclones, out to the west where people are going through drought—our people in our communities are resilient.

They want decent pay for a decent day's work; they want hope; they want opportunity; they want the very best for their kids; and they want to make sure that they are able to prosper and grow in a great state. Queensland is a great state, and we should never lose sight of the fact that we live in what I believe is the best state in our country. Our people are our heart and our soul. I reflect on what the Attorney-General has just said, and what drove us in opposition and continues to drives us each and every day is that the people of Queensland did not want to see the arrogant and out-of-touch government they were confronted with for three years led by the person whose name is no longer mentioned in this House: the former premier, Campbell Newman.

We went to the election believing that there was a better way for Queensland, and our first budget clearly delivered on that election promise in so many ways. When I look around at my ministers, my Minister for Education is driving an innovation agenda. She wants the best for our students and is putting in more front-line services. My health minister values our nurses and our doctors and is working hard to restore dignity back to the workplace. My Attorney-General: no more fights; the courts are getting on with the job; there is a clear separation of powers, and it is something that my government treasures and we pride ourselves on. My Minister for Science and Innovation and Minister for Housing is in the House and day in, day out she is making sure that people have a roof over their head, driving our agenda of Advance Queensland to make sure that we have the jobs of the future. What a great team! All of my team, every single backbencher—and a special welcome to all of the newly elected members of this House—work hard every day out in their electorates, out in the coalface, to make a difference to people's lives. They make strong representations to the ministers to ensure that change comes about: getting that extra maintenance that is needed for the school; getting the extra nurses that are needed for the hospital; representing their constituents. Why do they do that? Because that is what we were elected to do.

There is no greater honour than to be elected as a member of this House. It is an honour and a privilege that no-one here should ever lose sight of. Very few people have the opportunity to serve here, and every day that I stand here I feel the honour that the people of Inala have given me. With that comes enormous responsibility as well, and now as the Premier of this state I do not shirk from that every step of the way. What drives me is getting up every day to make a change and a difference. It is about making sure that when we are no longer here we leave this place in good hands: that we have protected the environment, that we have saved the Great Barrier Reef, and that we are making sure that we have a prosperous future for all.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Grace): Order! Member for Lockyer, really there is no need for the interjection. The Premier has the call.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you, member for Lockyer, for that interjection. I reflect on some of the growers out in his electorate and the amazing export opportunities that they are forging at the moment with countries such as Japan. We are driving that trade, and I have just come back tonight from a reception—

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Lockyer, I have given you some leeway. The next time I will not hesitate to warn you. There is no provocation; there is no reason for it.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. Labor governments have jobs at the forefront of their agenda, and we will always drive jobs in this state. Not only do we have a very clear economic agenda; we have a clear social responsibility as well. I think about the minister for disabilities, who is driving that workforce change to make sure that the National Disability Insurance Scheme is rolled out in this state. My government achieved that new launch site, and we are delivering on the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

I reflect on the Grantham floods inquiry which Walter Sofronoff was commissioned to conduct so that people could have the answers they so desperately needed. We let their voices be heard. One of the cornerstones of this government is that it is a consultative government with integrity and accountability. What we saw from those opposite over the last three years was them throwing out the rule book when it came to integrity and accountability. One only needs to look at the last two reports of the Auditor-General which have been handed down to see how the previous government ran an administration where accountability and transparency were thrown away.

I thank my cabinet and my caucus members for the consultative approach that they have adopted in terms of decision-making. They come together as one for the best outcomes in the best interests of the people of Queensland. They do not pick fights and they work together. This is in stark contrast to what we saw over the past three years. In closing I want to pay tribute to my electorate staff, because they work hard and they know that because of my job now I have to travel right across the state. I thank Mel, Charles, Matt and David—and Michelle was there for a while as well—for all the hard work that they do day in, day out talking to my constituents and raising issues of concern with me.

I also want to thank my family. I think every person in this House should remember that we spend many hours in this House, but we also spend a lot of time travelling and representing our electorates and doing various jobs, whether it is a minister, a member of a committee, a shadow minister or members representing large electorates in this state, and it is family that is always there for you when you go home. It is family that is prepared to listen and to show you support, and we should never lose sight of that. For those reasons, I thank them for their support.

I support the address-in-reply. I thank the Governor very much for his comments. Each and every day my government will work hard to continue to have the trust of the people of our wonderful state.