




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

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ADJOURNMENT

Italian National Day

 **Ms GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (10.58 pm): The Story Bridge is lit up tonight in the Italian colours of red, white and green to mark Italian National Day. It was a pleasure this evening to join hosts the Consul of Italy for Queensland, Ludovico Carlo Camussi, and president Santo Santoro of the Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland at a reception to celebrate Italian Republic Day, the national day of Italy.

Today we celebrate the 69th anniversary of the foundation of the republic of Italy, born on 2 June 1946. It was on this day that the Italian population was called on to decide what form of government to give the country after the Second World War and the fall of fascism. I also want to wholeheartedly congratulate my good friend Mr Antonio Palella, who was awarded an Italian knighthood for his services to the Italian community by Consul Camussi this evening.

Italy voted to establish the Italian Republic and abolish the monarchy and proudly celebrate this auspicious day. But in true Italian spirit, one single day of celebrations is not enough and we have been celebrating for a week. We have been enjoying and toasting everything Italian. As a proud Italo-Australian I have enjoyed immensely attending the many events that have been organised, starting with the official launch last week at the Treasury Hotel, where the open-air courtyard was transformed into an Italian piazza with matching foods and wines. CEO Geoff Hogg, Alison Smith, GM Corporate Affairs and their team did a fantastic job in kicking off the week-long celebrations. It was a great night.

Over the weekend the celebrations did not stop, with the Festa della Repubblica held by the co.as.it at the Brisbane Abruzzo Club, Carina, where I attended with the member for Sunnybank. Many thanks to co.as.it president Nereo Brezzi and director Dina Raineri and of course all the hardworking volunteers who made Sunday a great success. Sunday morning Italian mass at Holy Spirit in New Farm was followed by festivities in New Farm Park, where An Italian Affair street festival ensured you could sample all that is wonderful about Italy—its food, wine and music.

The crowds that attended the many events over the past week are testimony to the strong engagement of all the Italians across Queensland in coming together to celebrate Italian history, heritage and culture—not forgetting of course music, dancing, pizza, pasta and vino. Many thanks to all those involved in organising a very successful week of Italian celebrations.

I wish to formally acknowledge the valuable contributions of Queensland's proud Italian community. I mean, we were not able to get a good coffee in Brisbane until the Italians arrived! And imagine life without pizza, pasta, Italian bread, olive oil and gelato. I wish everyone a very happy Festa della Repubblica. Viva Italia!