



Speech By  
**Patrick Weir**


**MEMBER FOR CONDAMINE**

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## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **Country Racing**

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (1.35 am): Country racing is invaluable to the rural and regional areas of Queensland. It is the social fabric of many small communities that are reliant upon their biannual or annual country race meeting to raise funds and provide a reason to come together and socialise. The significance of these race days to the local economy, as well as providing an opportunity to gather and relax with neighbours, family and friends, should not be understated for the many people who live and work in rural Queensland.

The state of Queensland is divided into eight racing associations with 104 clubs in total, holding almost 290 race meetings every year. My electorate lies within the Eastern Downs Country Racing Association area and includes 17 clubs from the small township of Bell to the Dalby race club located in my largest community. The Picnic Races meeting held annually at Dalby is over 100 years old and has drawn crowds of more than 3,000 people. This year's Picnic Races saw perfect weather, with people travelling from all over Queensland and Northern New South Wales to attend. The Dalby race club ran its 150th Plough Inn Cup race day in 2009, sharing this special celebration with the first race meeting held in Queensland. Last year, I attended the Clifton race meeting and enjoyed the warm hospitality of rural Queenslanders.

The country racing industry employs, directly or indirectly, over 10,000 people who are devoted to the industry and love the work they do. Horse trainers, jockeys, strappers, stablehands, vets, livestock transporters, farriers and produce suppliers are some of the many jobs created in rural and regional centres because of country racing. The economies of small communities are boosted on race days, with motels, hotels and restaurants experiencing more trade. When the TAB race days are held in Dalby, the fuel suppliers see a significant increase in sales directly attributed to the race day. Many jockeys complete their apprenticeship in country areas. It is within the safety of this training ground that they learn their riding skills.

My family has been involved with horseracing for as long as I can remember. We have enjoyed the dust and dirt that sometimes comes with country racing and would not swap it for anything. It has been a part of my life and I hope the support for country racing continues for many years to come.