



Speech By
Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR DALRYMPLE

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ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (10.37 pm): It is a great honour to be elected to the 55th Parliament. I agree with what the Premier said before: it is a great honour to be a member of parliament. There are 4.7 million Queenslanders and there are only 89 members of parliament, which highlights what a great honour it is to be here. I really believe that it is very special. I congratulate the new members who have come into this place this year. I remember when I was first elected in 2004 and, when I saw Peter Beattie, Anna Bligh and all of those old politicians, I thought I was dreaming.

An opposition member: And now you are one of them.

Mr KNUTH: Thank you for the kind comments. I think Lawrence Springborg might have been one of those faces, as well. Being a member of parliament is a lot of hard work. I wanted to be a member of parliament, because I wanted to be able to take on the politicians who were annoying us. I bought a book by Fred Daly, the longest-serving politician in Australian history. He was a Labor politician. The book was called *The Numbers*. I read that book. It showed me how to get the numbers. I spent five years behind the scenes working to be a candidate. I became a candidate and worked hard. Fred Daly spoke about how his seat was abolished a number of times. He spoke about all the difficulties that he had within his own party to try to secure a seat when his seat was abolished. He spoke about how he had been knifed in the back and all of those things that can come with politics. I studied up and eventually ended up getting into parliament. I thank Fred Daly for his involvement in my journey into this parliament.

When I first entered parliament I was the member for Charters Towers. That electorate covered 270,000 square kilometres. It took in the Georgetown region. It nearly went out to Julia Creek. My electorate included the towns of Alpha, Jericho, Aramac, Muttaborra, Capella, Claremont, Moranbah, Tieri. Then I woke up and the seat was abolished. I then had to run for the new seat which stretches from Moranbah to the Atherton Tablelands. I had to take on another member of parliament.

It is a lot of hard work, but we cannot do it on our own. I thank my family—my wife, Heather, and children, Anna, Joel, Daniel and Naomi. It is sad when we cannot get to our kids sports days. I have missed some of their birthdays. There are touching moments that hurt us. I love my children and am so proud of them. I appreciate that my wife, Heather, has a husband who is never home, but she is 100 per cent behind my efforts and the work I put in.

The last election was very difficult, particularly as the campaign was called at short notice. My children were out letterbox dropping in 40 degree heat. They were trying to get the message across. My daughter Anna went to Lourdes Hill College. Members in this House still remember when my daughter would come to visit me in parliament dressed in her school uniform.

My son Daniel was born with a condition that meant that he had to have quite a few operations. He became very close to those in parliament. A former speaker of the House sat him in a chair beside his chair and called him his adviser. There are very special moments in this place. I have to mention

my mum. I do go to her sometimes when things are tough. She is a wonderful lady. My dad is 79 years old. Over the last 11 years he has handed out how-to-vote cards for me at Ravenswood. I thank my father for that.

I want to mention my electorate officers as well. One of my staff members Verna is 75 years old. She is a pocket dynamo. I said to her the other day, 'You leave when you want to leave.' She could be there if I am here in five years time. I do not know. She may be there when she is 80. This woman never stops. I will say to Verna, 'You can go home half an hour early.' She will say, 'No, Shane. I cannot be at home and think that somebody could be ringing. If I were not there when they rang I would not feel comfortable at the home.' This is the wonderful lady that Verna is.

I also have Lorraine who is dedicated, hardworking and a wonderful personality. I want to mention Scott. He has run two of my campaigns. He has resigned five times and I have employed him five times. Now he is the pastor of the Destiny Church. Sometimes we do have him work on a part-time basis. He is partly there. I have Kate who is efficient and a workaholic. Sally and Tammy job share. They have bubbly personalities and present well to constituents.

I thank the branch members and my family and friends who have been out there for me over the last 11 or 12 years handing out how-to-vote cards. I appreciate their support so much. I thank them for their efforts. It is always a combined effort.

I can catch a plane to Mackay and go west and I am in my electorate. I can catch a plane to Townsville and go west and I am in my electorate. I can catch a plane to Cairns and go west and I am still in my electorate.

I am not going to bring up all of the issues in my electorate, but I point out that we do need a new hospital in Atherton. We had a petition with over 5,700 signatories. I acknowledge the positive response from the minister. The hinterland health service is exploring options in terms of this hospital and Dimbulah and Charters Towers as well.

We have a \$300 million biofuel project in my electorate that has much potential. A lot of work has been put into it. I believe there is a federal government grant of over \$3 million to help pursue this project. We are seeking support from the present Queensland government to get enough water from the Burdekin to actually get this project up and running.

North Queensland Motor Sports association comprises many community representatives. We have land just outside Charters Towers that has been developed into a speedway. There is buggy cart and motorised car racing there. There is gold prospecting there.

There are issues around the Gregory Developmental Road. I will not bring up all the creeks and river crossings that need to be upgraded. I have brought this issue up in the parliament before. All that is needed is 38 kilometres of sealing and widening and the upgrading of the crossings at Cape River, Snake Creek, Stockyard Creek, Hann Creek, Clarke River and Basalt River. These are the main crossings. If we upgrade them we have an inland highway stretching from the Tablelands down to Rockhampton. There are many other things I could mention, but will not.

It has been a great honour and privilege to serve in this parliament and to work with every member of the House. A motto that I have embraced is the Lions motto. This has helped me dedicate myself to running as a candidate and winning a seat. The motto is 'It is an honour to serve'.