




Speech By
Steve Minnikin

MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH

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ADJOURNMENT

Australian Transgender Support Association of Queensland

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (9.40 pm): As is the case for so many of my city colleagues, my electorate is diverse, with a real cross-section of society, and it is a true honour to be able to represent every single one of them in this great House. I rise tonight to lend my support to the Australian Transgender Support Association of Queensland. I am proud to mention two strong and aspiring women who are integral to the foundation and success of ATSAQ who reside in the Chatsworth electorate. I first met the ATSAQ president, Ms Gina Mather, and secretary, Ms Kristine Johnson, at the inaugural Chatsworth volunteer Christmas function I instigated when I was first elected back in 2012. Since then I have built a strong working relationship with these ladies. Both Ms Mather and Ms Johnson have been members of ATSAQ since its inception in 1990.

The association was established to provide essential assistance to the transgender community. It aims to provide emotional and moral support for people with gender identity disorder, as well as their family and friends, in addition to providing information on medical and health services available to transgender people. Recently I was asked to write a column for the monthly ATSAQ newsletter, one which my office proudly helps to produce. In it I wrote about one of the reasons why I joined the LNP, which was its deep philosophical commitment to fight discrimination and to ensure maximum opportunity for all individuals to reach their potential. After all, it was an LNP government in the 1990s that established the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Commission and at the same time introduced the state's first ever LGBTI police liaison officers in every single police region of the state. Furthermore, it was an LNP government which continued to engage with the transgender community through the commission to confront the challenges of transgender members gaining meaningful employment. Our commitment to the transgender community has become a part of our DNA. We had foresight in the early 1990s and we continued our efforts in recent years to create awareness and provide access to important services.

I truly believe there is an opportunity for government to play an important and leading role in generating greater awareness and understanding of this societal group. We need to ensure that we, our children and our children's children are educated about the challenges transgender people face, both personally and in society. We are a far more enlightened society than we were years ago, but tolerance and understanding are the cornerstones of a truly democratic society. I commend the hard work of Ms Mather and Ms Johnson on leading the efforts in Chatsworth to change the way local communities view the transgender community. They continue to stand up for what they believe in and provide as much support as their resources permit. I look forward to learning more about the transgender community, their hopes and aspirations and have confidence that the LNP will continue to work hard to represent this group.