



Speech By  
**Glenn Butcher**


**MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE**

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## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **Celebrating Community Resilience Open Day**

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (9.10 pm): I rise tonight to speak about the resilience of community members in my electorate and to commemorate their recovery efforts following Cyclone Marcia. As mentioned this morning, last Sunday marked 12 months since Cyclone Marcia devastated many parts of Central Queensland, including my town of Gladstone. To mark this occasion the Gladstone Regional Council, with the assistance of funding from the department of communities, hosted a Celebrating Community Resilience open day in Mount Larcom. This event provided an opportunity not only for reflection and celebration but also to increase awareness about disaster prevention, preparation, response and recovery as well as existing service providers and community networks.

I was the state member for less than three weeks when Cyclone Marcia hit. It was a steep learning curve and it remains one of the most valuable lessons that I have learnt about the power of a strong and cooperative community in times of disaster and great need. As soon as it was deemed safe by emergency services personnel, I drove to Mount Larcom with regional councillor and deputy mayor Matt Burnett, whose assistance was invaluable, with his intimate knowledge of the many back roads and properties in this area. It was a defining and sobering moment for us both as we inspected the path of destruction.

After a furious weather event such as Cyclone Marcia, nothing ever returns to exactly the way it was. But my community is proof that rebuilding can happen. With the help of \$3.7 million in betterment funding from the Palaszczuk government, road infrastructure in my electorate will now be more resilient into the future. Resilience in our community translates to pitching in, helping mates, standing shoulder to shoulder or, in short, bouncing back. Indeed, the immediate bouncing back phase was a testing time for many in my electorate.

If there is one fact in life that we cannot escape, it is that we cannot control the weather. When it comes to a natural disaster, all we can do is prepare and desperately hope that it passes leaving behind no injuries, no loss of life and without decimating livelihoods.

Since the experience of Cyclone Marcia, very early in my role as a state member, I have liaised with the Queensland Reconstruction Authority, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority to arm myself with the full knowledge of declaration processes and assistance schemes to be at the ready, should a similar disaster happen again. It is my great wish for my community that I never have cause to revisit those processes.

I would like to congratulate the organisers of the Celebrating Community Resilience open day and recognise the efforts of the individuals in my electorate who pitched in, helped out and lent a hand. I am pleased to say that my community is well on the way to recovery.