



Speech By
Linus Power

MEMBER FOR LOGAN

Record of Proceedings, 17 March 2016

ADJOURNMENT

Oral Health; St Patrick's Day

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (1.51 am): More than half of Queensland children aged between five and 15 suffer from tooth decay. That is a stark and sobering statistic that all in this House should reflect on, as we know that childhood tooth decay leads to significant later oral and general health problems. That is why last week I was pleased to represent Minister Cameron Dick—as he was in Moura opening the brand-new local hospital—at the Browns Plains Community Health Centre to launch a new program that is being jointly rolled out by Metro North and Metro South health services called Lift the Lip. It is a program to equip child health nurses with vital resources so they can support families with preventative oral health advice and give them the skills to recognise dental disease and refer it to professional dental practitioners. It is about ensuring that we break down the silos between health specialties and see that patients get the care they need early to prevent further problems later in life. Queensland's Chief Dental Officer, Dr Brown, said at the launch—

This early intervention has the potential not only to save our kids' teeth, but also reduce the need for additional and sometimes costly and complex dental procedures.

I congratulate the continuing innovation of the health department to act to prevent ongoing health conditions that are so debilitating to the quality of Queenslanders' lives.

Today, 17 March—or at least it was a few hours ago—we celebrate the great St Patrick. He was not just an early Christian but also a unifying symbol of a nation and a diaspora that spreads throughout the world. In this place, many Irish or those of Irish descent have made a strong contribution, not least 100 years ago when Thomas 'TJ' Ryan led Labor to government in this place, building the very definition of Queensland as a progressive, fair state. His father's experience living through the famine in Tipperary would have given him a strong sense of social justice and fairness for all.

My grandfather Morrie O'Kane said—and he is right—that there are only two types of people in the world: the Irish and those who want to be Irish. Tonight—or at least last night—the whole world gets to be Irish, even those whose ancestors never graced that island of saints and scholars in the North Atlantic. Tonight—well, last night—all the Irish of the House, both the O'Palaszczuks and the McSpringborgs, celebrated the great saint and the Irish on this special day. I add, Mr Speaker, that the great Wellington himself was an Irishman, so you can celebrate it, too.