



Speech By  
**Tim Nicholls**


**MEMBER FOR CLAYFIELD**

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**PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

**Paralympians; Disability Action Week**

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.24 am): For the past week we have witnessed the best of the best compete in Rio de Janeiro at the 2016 Paralympic Games. As we celebrate Disability Action Week, it is fitting that we do honour those who have achieved extraordinary things in Rio. Queenslanders should be proud that in 2016 more than a quarter of the Paralympian team is from our great state and, Mr Speaker, haven't they done well? From swimming and basketball to equestrian and athletics, our Paralympians have put in a stellar effort.

Australia has so far snapped up a swag of gold metals, 21 silver and 20 bronze. Among the Queenslanders are swimmer Lakeisha 'Lucky' Patterson from Caboolture, who clinched gold in the women's 400-metre freestyle S8 category. The member for Whitsunday would not forgive me if I did not mention David Nicholas, who is from Proserpine, not from Rockhampton, who has won gold in the C3 cycling. We have the Australian men's basketball team, the Rollers, currently in the quarter final. The team includes no less than five Queenslanders and is shooting for its fourth consecutive Paralympics medal.

Rio is not the only place where Queenslanders with a disability are triumphing. This year, for Disability Action Week, Queensland's focus has been on the theme 'Inclusion: it's a game changer'. That is a poignant message for young Queenslanders with a disability. Watching the Paralympic Games, it is clear that there is no limit to what they can achieve. This week we have seen dozens of events held across the state honour, encourage, support and celebrate the contribution of Queenslanders with a disability. From games of cricket to community fun days, these events have been quintessentially Queensland—the place where everyone, and I do mean everyone, gets a chance to shine.

The Rio Paralympics and Disability Action Week remind us that just up ahead is another significant game changer. The National Disability Insurance Scheme remains a key priority for the LNP. It is encouraging to see the level of bipartisanship for the NDIS in Queensland and in Canberra. The scheme in Queensland has been brought about as a result of the \$868 million that was initially contributed in December 2012 as a result of the budget repair task that we undertook. It was the single biggest funding increase in Queensland for disability and associated services and led to us spending \$1.77 billion as a minimum by 2018, escalating funding at the rate of 4½ per cent—almost double the rate of inflation. That was put in place in 2013-14. It is absolutely apposite to remind people that when we came to government we had the lowest disability spend per capita in Australia. We will double that over five years. The talent, spirit and persistence of all of those with disabilities inspires us all to push past our barriers and be at our best.

*(Time expired)*