



Speech By  
**Joseph Kelly**


**MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES**

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Record of Proceedings, 9 May 2017

### CONDOLENCE MOTION

#### Mr PR Gray

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (9.43 am): I rise to speak in support of this condolence motion. Phil was the president of the QPSU when I worked there. In fact, I was part of the team which helped get him elected as president, and that was a great thing to be a part of. He was a great bloke and he was a good unionist. Sadly, he abandoned the cause of grey hair but I have long since forgiven him for that.

As a unionist, Phil built consensus. He was able to chair huge union council meetings with delegates from many different departments and occupational groups. He did that effectively and he always brought people with him in good spirit. I had many opportunities to work with Phil in negotiations, and he always wanted sensible outcomes for the members and for the organisations. He was never a winner-takes-all type of unionist: he was someone who was there for the long haul. He always built good relationships. He realised that good relationships last long beyond any dispute or disagreement.

He had many passions, and one of the things he taught me in his run for the presidency of the union—and something that no doubt he carried in his election campaign—is that if you are passionate about something then you have to talk about it over and over again, and he did that about four key things in my time at the union. He was passionate about the Public Service and the role and value of the Public Service in our great Westminster system of democracy, and he never tired of educating young delegates about why it was important to stand up for that independence. As the Premier has mentioned, he was passionate about education. He was also passionate about road safety in Western Queensland. He had a near miss early in his career, and he was always a strong advocate for improving travel safety for public servants. No doubt there are many people who have benefited greatly from this.

Finally, he was really passionate about the regions. He was the first person I heard who stood up and spoke strongly about the regions in Queensland. He was based on the Gold Coast. There are many members of this House who may have occasionally received a bit of a dig in the ribs from members of the QPSU, or the Together union as it is now known. You can thank Phil Gray for that, because he is the man who went out there and made sure that our regions had good representation. He is certainly the first person I ever heard who spoke passionately about the Gold Coast. He never failed to stand up at public gatherings of the QPSU and remind us that it was the seventh biggest city in Australia and it was on its way to becoming bigger and bigger.

Over the last few weeks I have spoken with a few of my former workmates, delegates and members of the union, and they all agree that Phil was a really decent bloke. He supported and cared for the members. He was really great to those of us who worked in the union. After he moved to Tasmania we certainly missed him on Labour Day, and we will certainly miss him at future Labour Day marches. On my behalf and on behalf of the members of the QPSU and Together union, I offer my condolences to his family.