



Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Furner**


**MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE**

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Record of Proceedings, 25 May 2017

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**National Sorry Day**

 **Hon. M FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Local Government and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (10.12 am): Tomorrow is National Sorry Day and the 20th anniversary of the *Bringing them home* report. Tabled in the Australian parliament in 1997, the *Bringing them home* report documented our nation's past shameful treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. These children are adults now and we know them as the stolen generations. I know my good friend Aunty Honour Cleary will be reflecting on that today. Today members of the House wear a purple ribbon symbolising resilience, healing and compassion.

Until the 1970s, under the government policies of the day, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were removed, often forcibly, from their families, their communities, their culture and country. Also this year is the 50th anniversary of the 1997 referendum's overwhelming yes vote to count Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the census. It is also 25 years since the Mabo land rights decision. These are monumental events etched in Australia's history. On equality, healing and reconciliation with our first nations people we have made significant ground because, as Queenslanders, as Australians, we are egalitarian in nature. As the latest national *Closing the gap* report shows, there is much more to be done to close the gap on disadvantage. National Sorry Day is an opportunity not only to reflect on the past but also to consider, as Queenslanders, the legacy that we want to be remembered for.