




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

Record of Proceedings, 8 August 2017

ADJOURNMENT

Waterford Electorate, *Poncho*

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (12.11 am): I rise today to formally welcome to the community of Waterford our new pint-sized bus *Poncho*. *Poncho* is a Queensland and, I believe, an Australian first. It is a small but disability accessible bus that now services the suburbs of Waterford and Holmview in my electorate. *Poncho* runs on bus route 567 through these suburbs, collecting people for school, work, shopping and appointments.

Before now, a large and growing section of the Waterford community had not had access to public transport. With semirural land being turned into housing estates and more families calling Waterford home, the need for this growing corridor to have public transport was urgent. However, there was one big barrier to getting public transport to these new areas and estates—and that was the size of the streets. Despite developers of these estates strongly implying to potential residents that buses would service the estates, they had not designed the streets wide enough to fit buses through the estates.

When I was a candidate for the 2015 election, I stood at residents' doorsteps and sat at their tables and listened to their frustrations about not having access to public transport. I heard of kids needing to get to school who had to use taxis and people wanting to go to Brisbane or the Gold Coast having to sit in their car in traffic instead of being able to hop on a bus and connect to the train network.

One story that will always stick in my mind was from Adam and Sam Channing. Sam is a local nurse and loving mother of Adam. Adam is a happy and positive young man who enjoys his job and helping out his mum. Adam cannot drive for medical reasons and needed either his mum to drive him to work or to catch a taxi. He only works as a casual, so they found this difficult.

Sam, being a nurse, would often have to be at work herself. With this new bus, Adam and everyone else in the local community can now get to work using public transport. This is a massive relief for both Adam and Sam, and it is an extra special win for them as they were two of my chief petitioners, collecting pages and pages of signatures for this new bus during our campaign. They even had to drop into my office on several occasions to get more copies of the petition.

It is because of this wonderful grassroots campaign I was proud to lead that we were lucky enough to find this solution and deliver a new bus for the community. I want to place on record my appreciation to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Transport, Jackie Trad, and her office for their help; to TransLink for helping to find a solution and educate residents about the new route; and, last but not least, to the residents who joined me for this fight. I am so proud we have had this win and that none of us took no for an answer.