




Speech By
Aaron Harper

MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA

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ADJOURNMENT

The Cure Starts Now

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (7.16 pm): Each year in the parliament I support a local charity, which of course has seen me wearing a bright pink floral jacket and who can forget last year when I wore a gold suit for the Townsville Hospital Foundation and the Golden October Foundation, which are both good charities. This year, I am proudly supporting The Cure Starts Now. In 2009 local Townsville father Ren Pederson and his family lost Amy, their nine-year-old daughter, to an aggressive brain cancer called diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma or DIPG, as it is commonly known. Since then, the determined and passionate father has started the Australian branch of The Cure Starts Now.

The Cure Starts Now is gaining massive recognition, both here and overseas. It was established by parents experiencing the depth of human suffering, losing their child to brain cancer. The registered charity has raised over \$3 million towards research to help find a cure for brain cancer. All funds, every cent, donated to The Cure Starts Now is used to promote and advance Australian research into the elimination of cancer as a whole. Ren promised his daughter Amy that he would never give up and nor should we. Australian scientists are making real inroads through research into tissue samples that are analysed and shared on an international registry.

Sunday, 20 May will be a good day as it is my birthday—even though I am in denial after turning 50—and I want to do something entirely good for the community. Therefore, I will take the Harper truck to the Townsville Convey for the Cure to help raise money for research into brain cancer. The Cure Starts Now mission is one that knows no boundaries and stops at no borders. Its aim is to cure cancer, one child at time. This is not just a Townsville charity. From our own electorates it is likely that we all know someone who has endured this horrible disease, which impacts children and families in the most devastating way. Therefore, I ask all members of the parliament to please support the charity by making a donation to The Cure Starts Now or the Convoy for the Cure.

The Cure Starts Now is also Kirwan State High School's main charity. Mr Speaker, as you know, they lost John Livingstone to brain cancer a few years ago. I thank them for their support. I also thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker Stewart, Minister Coralee O'Rourke, Minister Fentiman, Minister Dick, Barry O'Rourke and the other members who have already donated or made a pledge to support this great charity. Townsville locals, businesses and community leaders would all agree that Ren Pedersen is an absolute inspiration. I commend his work and dedication to helping save lives through this important and vital research: The Cure Starts Now.