




Speech By
Brittany Lauga

MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

Record of Proceedings, 17 May 2018

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Keppel Electorate, Indigenous Place Names

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (2.10 pm): 'Gudamulli' means hello in Darumbal language. I acknowledge the Darumbal people as the traditional owners and native title holders of the land, winds and water which I represent in this place, and I acknowledge the Darumbal people as the carers and protectors of that land for over 50,000 years. I also respectfully acknowledge the Woppaburra people as the traditional owners of the Keppel islands, land which I also represent in this place.

I am so incredibly pleased that from tomorrow two iconic landmarks in Keppel will officially be renamed to their traditional rightful names, their Aboriginal names. From tomorrow Mount Wheeler will be known as Gai-i and Mount Jim Crow will be known as Baga. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are the two longest ongoing cultures in the world. Renaming official places which were named after colonisation back to their traditional names—their Aboriginal names—is, in my opinion, the right thing to do and a step in the right direction towards reconciliation. I am proud to have worked side by side with our local Darumbal elders to help have these landmarks renamed. I spoke with Darumbal elder Aunty Sally Veia on Tuesday afternoon. I congratulated her and all of the traditional owners—the Darumbal people—for this great achievement. She told me that she now feels at rest.

I climbed Gai-i with local elders and celebrated NAIDOC Week with the Darumbal people at the base of Gai-i in 2015. It was a life-changing experience for me. Gai-i and its surrounding area, named Gawula, is a very culturally sensitive and important place for many reasons. It holds Dreamtime stories, it was an important meeting place and a place of prime fishing and hunting, but it is also the place of sorry business. Hundreds, possibly thousands—we do not know exactly how many because no-one counted how many were slain—of Aboriginal people were massacred at Gawula and around the district in the 1800s. Gawula, Gai-i and Baga are sacred places for the Darumbal people.

I grieved for the Aboriginal people who were murdered there and I felt ashamed that our community does not speak more about the atrocities that occurred. For that, I am deeply sorry. To truly reach reconciliation we must be honest about our past—about our sad history—but I was also so incredibly proud to stand side by side with our Aboriginal brothers and sisters at Gawula, and I continue to stand side by side with them because our Indigenous cultural heritage is something both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Queenslanders should be proud of.

I want our local Indigenous community to be proud of these iconic and beautiful natural places as opposed to being constantly reminded about sorry business. There was racist backlash when calls were made to give Indigenous people the right to vote. There was racist backlash when there were calls made for a national apology, but it did not stop Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and community leaders from fighting for what is right. I am proud that these two beautiful and important landmarks will be known from now on as Baga and Gai-i.