




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR NINDERRY

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ADJOURNMENT

Coolum Local Animal Warriors

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (7.17 pm): I am proud to announce to the parliament tonight that as of last week I am now a fully fledged patch member of a group called CLAW—Coolum Local Animal Warriors—and I have the badge to prove it. Last week I was invited to take the pledge promising to uphold the mission of CLAW and be an animal welfare advocate. In doing so, I have joined a select group of Coolum State High School students, mostly year 7s, sharing a vision to raise awareness of animal welfare issues and to support local animal charities.

The group was born through the commendable culture at Coolum State High School that encourages students to get involved in community minded activities. CLAW coordinator and teacher Ms Jen Pierson said she wanted to engage those students with a passion for animals and wildlife in particular. So far the group has raised around \$500, which will be donated at the end of the term to Wildlife Rescue Sunshine Coast for its animal ambulance.

The Sunshine Coast is home to a number of animal welfare and support groups including the 4 Paws Animal Rescue, the Sunshine Coast Animal Refuge and the Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre at Eumundi to name just a few. Like many community groups, these groups are run on the smell of an oily rag and rely heavily on volunteers. Thanks to an unwavering commitment to their cause, there is a strong awareness and great community support for the tremendous work they do.

It is in our schools where the passion of these same volunteers is instilled and fostered. CLAW coordinator Jen Pierson summed it up perfectly when she said, 'It seems critical to me that we engage our young people with the environment so they can become its proud protectors.'

CLAW is yet another initiative of one of the fantastic schools in my electorate, Coolum State High School. It is not the first time this year that I have had good reasons to speak about this school in parliament. The school boasts five academy of excellence programs including instrumental music, cheerleading, touch football, basketball and surfing, but that is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to success. Next year the school will extend its excellence programs. The Academic Learning Program for High Achievers will target gifted and talented year 7s while the Young Entrepreneurs Academy will inspire the next generation of entrepreneurial thinkers.

Again, it is within the supportive environment of our schools that our future leaders and community stalwarts are nurtured and encouraged so that one day they too will foster that sense of passion in the younger generation and continue their proud legacy of helping others. Congratulations to Coolum State High School and the student cohort, along with principal Troy Ascott, the teachers and support staff, the P&C and the school community for laying the groundwork. Undoubtedly, CLAW members will further strengthen their commitment to looking after the environment and become passionate advocates, mentoring the next generation in a similar way.