




Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

Record of Proceedings, 1 November 2018

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (3.15 pm): The election was almost a year ago, but I would still like to use this opportunity to welcome new members and returned members to the House and wish those new members in the 56th Parliament luck. I am extremely proud and honoured to have represented the people of the Nanango electorate since 2012. I would like to thank them for putting their faith in me to continue as their representative in this parliament. Like everyone in the chamber, we are all incredibly humbled to be elected by our community. My passion and commitment to keep working hard for our community is as strong as ever, and I will continue to fight for our fair share of the region. As so many of my team have heard me say, all politics is local.

With the recent state electorate boundary realignments—which are not that recent now—the Nanango electorate continues to include Somerset and South Burnett but also includes additional areas, which may not have been mentioned by me in the House, of the Gympie regional area. I am proud to represent people from Tingoora, Wondai, Murgon, Proston, Wheatlands, Durong, Cherbourg, Cloyna, Windera, Tansey, Boobyjan, Kilkivan, Woolooga and Goomeri. I welcome these areas into the Nanango electorate. I have travelled extensively across these areas and met with as many members of the community as possible, and I want to thank them for their warm welcome. I know that some, particularly those around Tansey, have had real trouble because of the recent supercells that went through, as have the good people around Kumbia and Coolabunia.

I want to take a moment to highlight some of the key priorities across the Nanango electorate. We have an urgent need for funding across our regional road network, especially in the Brisbane Valley Highway and the D'Aguilar Highway in the Somerset region and the Mundubbera Durong Road in the South Burnett. I am fighting to improve access to health services including securing a community health nurse for the areas of Goomeri and Kilkivan. I am absolutely determined to hold this Labor government to account when it comes to the ongoing lengthy wait times for patient travel subsidy refunds, wait times to see specialists and, in particular, the blowout in wait times to see a dentist in the South Burnett hospital in Kingaroy.

I commit to continuing to work with my community groups to further the need for extra funding for mental health and drug related problems in the South Burnett, Somerset and other regions. Sadly, crime and, in particular, juvenile crime have escalated across the electorate. Queenslanders deserve to feel safe in their homes, and I will continue to work for better resourcing for our police not only in my electorate but across Queensland.

I will continue to fight for primary producers in the Nanango electorate, especially when it comes to key issues affecting them including Labor's abhorrent native vegetation laws and better access to water. I will continue to work with my federal colleagues Llew O'Brien and David Littleproud to improve the economic development of our region which includes access to more water and more tourism funding.

I want to take this opportunity to give my thanks to my predecessor, Tim Nicholls. Tim always remained positive during last year's election campaign, despite the hostile and incredibly personal and negative campaign against him. I hope now that Labor will focus on their record and end the negative politicking.

An opposition member: They won't.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: They will not, and I take that interjection. We see it day in, day out. When a Labor government has to rest on their own record they have nothing, so what do they do? They use personal attacks, they start blaming the previous governments, they blame the federal government—anything to back away from their record. It is always everyone's fault but their own. Labor love to blame, even though, unfortunately, Labor have been in power in this state for most of the last 25 years. Nothing has been clearer over the past year than the fact that Labor has no plan and no vision for Queensland. It was the previous Labor governments which sold the assets, yet they continue to blame.

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: The minister over there laughs because she knows how difficult she found the child safety department. That was terrible; it was a disaster.

An opposition member: They sacked her.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will take that interjection. They did sack her. They are not governing; they are bumbling along from crisis to crisis and Queenslanders simply deserve better.

To my deputy, Tim Mander, thank you for your continued support. As a team, we lead a party of hardworking members with many new faces in our party room and shadow cabinet. I would like to acknowledge those 10 new members of the LNP: Sam O'Connor from Bonney; Brent Mickelberg from Buderim; Simone Wilson from Bribie Island; David Batt from Bundaberg; David Crisafulli from Broadwater; Dan Purdie from Ninderry; Marty Hunt from Nicklin; Jim McDonald from Lockyer, my neighbour; Col Boyce from Callide, my other neighbour; and James Lister from the Southern Downs. I have to correct the record because Simone Wilson is from Pumicestone which includes Bribie Island. It is wonderful to see all of these new faces as part of the LNP team because we are dedicated to the cause and we know that the LNP is a party for all of Queensland.

We come from many varied backgrounds, unlike those opposite. Before politics, I obviously had a varied career, be it as a small business owner, farming with my husband or as a lawyer, and of course I am a mum to three amazing, beautiful daughters. Sitting on these benches on this side with me, we have many former police officers, members who have served overseas in our armed forces, nurses, builders, farmers, doctors, small business owners, teachers and of course NRL referees. We all share—

An opposition member: We have some lawyers.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I said lawyers. We share a common goal, and that common goal is to work hard for our electorates and work hard for all of Queensland. My priority in this 56th Parliament has been to unite Queensland with a team that represents all of Queensland. We need to end Labor's division between South-East Queensland and the rest of the state. We unite for State of Origin; we come together time and time again to defeat those in the south in the best contest of the year. As leaders in this place, we need to bring Queenslanders together, working for a better community and a better Queensland for our kids. I will always fight for Queensland because I care about this state. We live in a great state full of hardworking and passionate people, so I will always stand up for Queensland, for those hardworking Queenslanders—people, mums and dads, who make our state—

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! The minister will cease interjecting with obviously inflammatory interjections or the minister will be warned.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker—

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I warn the minister under the standing orders. Those contributions are unacceptable and the minister knows better.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: As a mother of three daughters, I actually know what it is like to be a mother and to work hard for my community, for my daughters, for everyone across Queensland. I will not be lectured by a Labor minister who is so clueless that she let children fall through the cracks in this great state. I am a mother and I am proud to be one. I will continue to fight for all of Queensland.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Logan will cease interjecting or I will warn him under the standing orders.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: As opposition leader, I will not just keep this government and their incompetent ministers to account; I will offer solutions. We have already seen the Labor Party hand in our homework on many policies, such as the tolling inquiry, taking action on ice, compulsory swimming lessons for kids, matching the LNP's commitment to fix the M1 and matching our commitment about real-time fuel price monitoring, and I do urge the government to stop the delays in this process so we can deliver fairer fuel prices for all Queenslanders. I am under no illusion about the work we need to do to rebuild faith with Queenslanders. I am in politics to help make people's lives better, and nothing else. Queenslanders have spoken at the last two elections and as a party—

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition has the call, but I am listening carefully to where interjections come from.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: We must listen, regroup and rebuild faith in the LNP as the only party that can deliver for Queensland.

The minister constantly interjects over there, and it is disappointing that the difference between them on that side of the chamber and us could not be starker. I was raised in a family where you did not just sit back and complain from the sidelines and expect others to create opportunities for you and solve your problems for you. I was raised to roll up my sleeves, get out and do something about it. I can assure all Queenslanders that I will take that no-frills attitude to politics and with me what you see is what you get. That is why earlier this year I announced the LNP's economic plan for Queensland—a plan that will bust congestion, ensure better health and education services, provide cheaper electricity, deliver water security and guarantee no new taxes. Our economic plan is focused on creating more jobs and more opportunities for Queenslanders, with a plan to grow our economy now and into the future. This is just the start of the LNP's plan for Queensland's future.

The need for a dramatic change of political direction in Queensland is growing day by day. As we approach the end of 2018, our economy is stagnating while vital public services are in decline and crime continues to go through the roof, yet the Palaszczuk government's only answer to this is to inflict five new taxes which will rip \$2.2 billion out of the economy.

While the Premier has spent the last few months scurrying away from public scrutiny it was the Liberal National Party that has been putting forward our plan for a more prosperous Queensland. The economic plan that the LNP has put forward will make it easier for Queenslanders to get a job and to get ahead no matter what corner of this great state they live in. Our plan contains major investments in infrastructure to bust congestion in the south-east, commitments to improve the Bruce Highway and regional roads as well as new transport infrastructure to unleash the potential of our economy.

A future LNP government would also invest in a new generation of dams to drive jobs growth in our regions. Our policies will give agriculture and industry the water they need to create those jobs. As well as providing water security, we will also supply the regions with cheaper electricity. We will achieve this by extending competition in the electricity retail market to the whole of Queensland, breaking Ergon's stranglehold on consumers north of Gympie and west of Toowoomba.

Mr Lister: Hear, hear!

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I take the interjection from the member for Southern Downs. Why should residents in regional Queensland be treated as second-class consumers? We will also drive down power prices by creating more competition among electricity generators. Our plan will also turn around our most important public services.

I believe it is unacceptable that we air-condition almost every state owned building including hospitals, prisons and the parliament, but we let our students suffer and swelter in summer. I want our kids to be cool kids, and a future LNP government will ensure every state school classroom is air-conditioned. We will also empower our principals and our parents—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! Members will cease interjecting.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON:—by saving the successful independent public schools initiative.

Dr Miles interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The minister will cease interjecting.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: In Health, every indicator of patient care is going backwards. Every indicator of patient care is going backwards once again, just like it did under Anna Bligh.

Dr Miles interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member will resume her seat. The minister will withdraw the statement. It is unparliamentary to say the member is lying.

Dr MILES: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I remind the minister that the Leader of the Opposition has not been taking interjections. If something provocative is said, the minister can respond appropriately. However, the minister is continuing to interject without any purpose.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My plan will make patients a priority again by introducing financial incentives within Queensland Health to improve care. We will also work with doctors in the private sector to ensure patients are treated on time.

One thing we will not be doing is introducing more taxes. Under this government we have seen the highest unemployment in the nation, flatlining business confidence and an economy that is in the doldrums, hence, that is why those opposite are always looking for personal attacks: they have nothing else in their playbook. We need a government that makes it easier for people to get ahead, not harder, and the LNP's economic plan will do just that. I have a great team alongside me and a great party behind me. Together we will unite this state and ensure that Queensland's best days are ahead of us.

It is no secret that I am passionate about regional Queensland. I have no doubt that many on the government front bench think that regional Queensland is just the other side of the river. Nothing demonstrates that more than when this health minister shuts down regional maternity centres in the areas of Callide and Chinchilla. It is an absolute disgrace to regional Queensland. I was born in Miles, raised on a beef cattle property and attended the tiny Guluguba State School. I have a passion for all of Queensland, but regional Queensland will always hold a special place in my heart. The LNP has always—and will always—stood up for the rights of regional Queenslanders, particularly when those opposite have put their own agenda ahead of everyone else in the regions.

There are so many more failures that I do not have the time to cover, be it rail fail or the increase in crime. There is so much. I want to finish by acknowledging the volunteers, the friends and the family who did so much before, during and after last year's election to support both me and the LNP. Behind every campaign there are always men and women who work tirelessly towards a cause they believe in passionately. The LNP has members across Queensland who do just that time and time again. I am sure I speak for all members on this side of the House when I say we are grateful for their support. There are many, many people but I personally would like to thank my family, my friends and, very importantly, my campaign manager, Chris Andersen. I know his wife has had many health problems in the last little while. I really do want to thank Chris for the time he takes away from his family.

Of course, I want to thank my booth coordinator Col Kiem—an absolute stalwart of our party; he is a superstar—and treasurer Susan Mortimer and the entire Nanango local team. I want to thank my hardworking electorate office staff: Lenny, Kate and Belinda—and I know that Kate is working extraordinarily hard where she ended up: in the Ninderry electorate—and their families. These ladies continue to work tirelessly to help me but, more importantly, to serve the people of the Nanango and for that I am extraordinary grateful. They are wonderful, wonderful people.

I really want to put on record my heartfelt thanks to my mum and dad and my siblings, who just do so much for Jason and me and for Isabella, Lucy and Elke. I could not be in this House and I could not be the Leader of the Liberal National Party without the support of my husband, Jason, and my three daughters, Isabella, Lucy and Elke. They are champions. I have brought them up to believe that nothing can ever stop them. We know the toll that political life can take on our families—the long hours and the travel—but I am so lucky to have these amazing people at my side. I will continue to work for Queensland. I could not think of a better group of people to have on our side whilst we do just that than this group in the LNP on this side of the chamber.