




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

Record of Proceedings, 18 October 2018

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (5.55 pm): At the last election, Queenslanders were asked to choose between what I believe are the cuts and chaos offered by the LNP and a government that would continue to take our state forward. I am pleased to say that the people chose progress and a Labor government. I congratulate the Premier on a fantastic win which returned a Labor government to this state so we can continue the great work we had done in the previous three years.

I am proud to be a representative of a government which values the contribution of all Queenslanders and serves them equally. I am honoured to have been appointed the Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations. I am particularly honoured to be sharing with the new members who joined us at the last election. In particular, I acknowledge the member for Cook, Cynthia Lui, our first Torres Strait Islander representative. It is an honour to be in the House with the member for Cook. She is a wonderful representative for the constituents in her area.

I welcome all the new Labor members who are absolutely fantastic. I do not want to name them for fear of forgetting one, but I welcome them all to the chamber. I also welcome those on the opposite side who have come into this House for the first time. I welcome each and every one of you and look forward to working with you in my portfolio of education. I notice the member for Buderim is in the House. How much money has the member for Buderim got for schools in his area? If I hear him complain, I will have words with him.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms GRACE: I have got them all stirred up. It is an honour to return with all of the members of parliament who were here last time as well, and I welcome them all into the House. It is an honour to serve once again in a cabinet that has at least 50 per cent representation of women and to share the cabinet with my colleagues. We are a united cabinet and that comes from strong leadership from the Premier and the Deputy Premier. We work on issues together to make sure that we advance Queensland in the manner which we believe only a Labor government can.

In a Labor government, we know that education is a great equaliser, and it is a privilege to be entrusted with the future of our greatest assets—Queensland's children. In the industrial relations portfolio, I am on the record as being a proud trade unionist, and everyone knows my passion for standing up for workers' rights. The budget that I have this year to deliver education is incredible, but what we do need is long-term guaranteed federal funding both in early childhood education and care and in education. I look forward to completing the bilaterals so we get our fair share.

I note that the federal government has made their deal with the non-government sector. Additional money has been provided to that sector. I once again reiterate that I do not begrudge any educational institution receiving additional funding; however, the state of Queensland wants our fair share for government schools and I will not stop until we get that.

The seat of McConnel changed its name at the last election. We went from being Brisbane Central to McConnel. I must admit I did prefer the name Brisbane Central.

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Ms GRACE: We had some boundary changes, and I take the interjection from the member for Clayfield, who inherited some areas of my electorate. McConnel is what the electorate is called now. No matter what the electorate is called, it is a wonderful electorate. This electorate is an inner-city electorate. Let me tell honourable members that every state is judged on its capital city, and Brisbane is a fantastic city and it is going to be even better. We are delivering infrastructure in the inner city that will well and truly make us a world-class city on a par with any city.