




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Book Week

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (2.25 pm): I suggest that there is another lever and this is a great opportunity to talk about it: it is Book Week. The theme of this year's Book Week is 'Find your Treasure'. Certainly I found plenty of that when I visited every childcare centre, kindy and primary school in my electorate to donate a book by local authors Katie and Giuseppe Poli called *Marvellous Mummy*. It is a truly marvellous book.

I support Book Week because I know what reading means for our community. I have spoken often of the work of Dr Michael Marmot, but he is just one of many researchers who have demonstrated that the earlier we start people in education and the longer they stay engaged in education, the better their health outcomes will be over their lifetimes. We know that applies to education, we know it applies to social outcomes and we know it applies to employment. If we really want to deal with these issues, let us get into the classrooms early, let us get in there hard and let us teach kids to read.

During my visits, I found the real treasure, which is kids who love to read. That has not happened by accident. It has happened because of the love, commitment and hard work of parents, teachers and librarians, supported by the Palaszczuk Labor government. The importance of reading is why the Palaszczuk government has provided more support in this year's budget for programs such as the First 5 Forever program, which supports local librarians to assist families and kids to develop not just the skills to read but also the love of reading. It builds on other Palaszczuk government initiatives, such as the Premier's Reading Challenge, making prep compulsory and establishing the Reading Centre to support families and teachers across this great state. I am a board member of SPELD, an organisation funded by the government to support people experiencing learning differences. We have put in place free playgroup membership to ensure that mums, dads and bubs are engaged as early as possible in socialising. All of those initiatives are designed to support parents, teachers and librarians to inspire kids to love to read.

I compare that to the LNP record. At the present time they cannot even provide certainty around who is in charge at the federal level, so they certainly cannot provide certainty around universal access to kindergarten. We know that there are continual threats to cut support for universal access to kindergarten. Let us look at the record of the Newman government. One of its first acts was to cut the Queensland Literary Awards. One of my local schools lost teaching staff due to changes to the rounding mechanism. It was not just the cuts; it was the fact that there were no new programs.

I am pleased to be part of a government that is committed to early childhood education. This Friday I will be visiting more schools to read with kids. I know they are supported by parents, teachers and librarians who are supported by the Palaszczuk Labor government, because we believe in reading.

(Time expired)