




Speech By
Leanne Linard

MEMBER FOR NUDGE

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ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (5.39 pm): It is a great privilege to rise to address this House once again as the member for Nudgee. Securing the support of my community for a second term in this place is no less an honour than the first day I walked in here. The 2017 state election was the third time I have contested the seat of Nudgee, having been unsuccessful in the whitewash of 2012 and coming back in 2015 and 2017 more determined than ever to give my community the strong voice and advocacy it deserves.

I would like to begin where I intend to end, and that is by thanking the electors of Nudgee for the faith they have instilled in me to continue to serve and represent their interests in this place. Some of those who did in this election did so for the first time, and I would like to warmly welcome those constituents in the new part of my electorate in Nundah and Wavell Heights to the Nudgee family following the state redistribution of electoral boundaries that occurred last year.

My team made it a challenge to knock or phone and write to every one of the thousands of new homes we gained in the redistribution, and we did it and we had a lot of fun doing it too. I had some of my most memorable conversations on the doorsteps in this new area, where many residents had never heard of or from their previous member. I made some wonderful new friends through these conversations and gained some fantastic new stakeholders—like Nundah Community Enterprises Co-op, Nundah Neighbourhood Centre, Nundah Rotary, Lions, Nundah Historical Society, Nundah State School, Mary MacKillop College, St Joseph's primary school, Nundah Now, Loving Nundah, Northern Suburbs Bowls Club, Wavell Heights Community Hall, Nundah/Wavell Girl Guides and so many more.

Of course, change rarely comes without some loss, and it was with sadness that the taking effect of the new boundaries also meant saying goodbye to some valued friends. I would like to take this opportunity to wish Geebung State School, Wavell State High School, Wavell Heights Primary School, Zillmere State School, St Kevin's Primary School, St Dymphna's Primary School and Our Lady of Assembly Primary School, their principals, P&Cs, P&Fs and all their school communities, along with Geebung Bowls Club, Geebung RSL and so many others across the suburbs of Geebung and parts of Zillmere, Wavell Heights and Chermside all the very best for the future. It was a pleasure to represent you for the past three years, and I know that my colleagues, the members for Aspley and Stafford, who now represent these areas, will serve them well.

I would like to thank our Premier, Anastacia, and acknowledge that it is in such large part her humility, consultative approach to leadership and the comfort that both of these qualities engender in the Queensland community that has afforded me the opportunity to once again take my seat on this side of the chamber. I also offer my belated congratulations to all members across this House on their election to this honourable place and those who have been elevated to the high office of cabinet and shadow cabinet positions. To serve your electorate is a great honour; to serve the electorate of Queensland is a greater responsibility still.

I particularly congratulate those newly elected members. It is always a special experience to listen to maiden speeches and to gain a small window into what has brought people to this place. The speeches delivered by new members, including Cynthia Lui, which I found particularly moving, did not disappoint. While congratulating the new, I also take a moment to remember those who are no longer in this place. This is a transient place, particularly so in more recent times—we all know that—but it is also a place where friendships form and people are missed on both sides.

Before turning to the term ahead, I would like to reflect for a moment on the past. Nudgee is my home. It is where I grew up, where I was educated, where I started my first job, where I bought my first home and where I am now raising my two young boys. It is in local clubs that my boys play footy and we train in Goju Kai, where we shop, where we celebrate special occasions at one of our many fantastic local restaurants, microbreweries or wine bars, where we grab a quick coffee and use local services. Perhaps, some would say, it might be healthy to once in a while leave its boundaries, but clearly these are just the jealous ramblings of those who do not live there. Levity aside, for me, everything I raise in this House and on behalf of my community is personal and my advocacy all the more passionate because of it.

By working together with local community, government and stakeholders alike, we were able to secure much needed infrastructure and service improvements across my electorate last term. These included in our local schools: a new \$6 million performing arts centre at Wavell State High School; \$250,000 for new senior school bathroom facilities, a full-time guidance officer, the installation of industrial ceiling fans in the hall and a \$5,000 grant for engineering, robotics and programming from Queensland Rail at Earnshaw State College—

Ms Grace: The best fans in the world.

Ms LINARD: At Nundah State School as well; this one was at Earnshaw, Minister. Improvements also included: new shade sail and seating for the prep area at St Pius primary school; a new security intercom, shade sail and trees to enhance privacy and security at Banyo C&K Kindergarten; and road safety improvements, with flashing school zone lights installed for St Pius, Boondall State School, Geebung State School, St Kevin's Primary School, Virginia State School and Boondall State School. Every one of these improvements last term I had the pleasure of advocating for and seeing delivered for my local school communities, but I could not have done so without my colleague and friend the former minister for education, Kate Jones, and I thank her.

In health, the electorate is now home to a new \$13 million 24-hour ambulance station and QAS Emergency and Fleet Management Precinct in Geebung. It was lovely to have the health minister, Steven Miles, out to officially open this and a new \$5 million step-up step-down mental health facility at Nundah recently.

From education and health, I move to public transport. Last term saw: a new pedestrian footbridge, signage, lighting and CCTV, as well as additional commuter car parks delivered at Banyo Railway Station; a reconfiguration of and additional commuter car parks at Nundah park-and-ride; an expansion of park-and-ride facilities at Nudgee train station; and the commencement of a significant accessibility upgrade of Boondall Railway Station which will include a new pedestrian footbridge with lift access, raised platforms, extended shelters, upgraded security cameras and station lighting.

Our vibrant local community and sporting sector saw millions of dollars in additional funding and grants to support programs, including at Nundah Neighbourhood Centre for their legal and domestic violence programs and Micah family support services at Zillmere, as well as facility upgrades at Toombul Cricket Club, Norths Rugby League Club, Zillmere PCYC, Hendra Pony Club, Nundah Activity Centre, Boondall ice skating and many more. Of course, our joint funding commitment to the upgrade of the Gateway Motorway to six lanes between Nudgee and Bracken Ridge has already taken shape across my electorate and the Sandgate electorate over the past nine months. This will improve congestion on the motorway and Sandgate Road into the future.

While much has been achieved, there is much more still to be delivered across my electorate. This term I look forward to seeing local election commitments including park-and-ride extensions at Geebung and Virginia stations delivered, as well as a \$5.5 million investment in a new home for the Northside Wizards Basketball club and indoor sports complex at Zillmere.

With 12 train stations across the electorate, it is no surprise that public transport improvements will continue to be a key part of my focus again this term. In this regard, I look forward to seeing a new \$1.9 million police railway squad outpost constructed at Northgate station this year and the completion of the Boondall station accessibility upgrade. I also look forward to continuing to work with the minister, Queensland Rail and TransLink on behalf of my community to continue to seek timetable improvements and ongoing park-and-ride improvements across my local network. I meet regularly with the minister, his office, Queensland Rail and TransLink regarding these local priorities, and I take this opportunity to thank them for always being willing to listen to the concerns of my community.

Conversely, I continue to hold hope that the Brisbane City Council and local LNP councillor for Northgate will finally come to the table and start a genuine and constructive dialogue on how we can work together to improve road safety at the Banyo road and rail crossing, because, while it may not be a priority of theirs, it is a priority of my community and therefore of mine.

Ms Grace: Don't hold your breath for the Libs.

Ms LINARD: I will not, Minister. You are absolutely right. Equally, I hope to see a completed masterplan at council level and support at both local and state government level for the Zillmere PCYC in my electorate. This PCYC does so much with so little, when the need is great in the surrounding community. The connection between community and police is never as dynamic as when it is brought into parity, and that is what I see in the services delivered at this PCYC. I would like to pay tribute to the executive there, to the branch manager, Sergeant Scott Jensen, and to his team for their dedication to building community resilience, capacity and connection.

When I first sat down to write this speech following the election last November, I wrote of the need to upgrade the pool change rooms and pool facilities at Virginia State School and the installation of industrial fans at Nundah State School as local improvements I was working with my community to secure. It is truly a pleasure to already have been able to deliver these improvements alongside my community thanks to the generous support of education minister Grace Grace and her department in the recent state budget. Thank you, Minister. These are just some of the priorities on behalf of my local community, and I am excited about what we can achieve together over the coming term.

From local considerations to broader ones, I had the great pleasure of being the chair of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee in the last parliament. All of the work of this parliament is important, but it felt particularly so when looking at the challenging nature of child safety, domestic and family violence prevention legislation, mental health reform, disability services, abortion law reform and even briefly euthanasia.

Much of the work of the committee fell within the portfolio of the previous minister for health, Cameron Dick, who was also extremely supportive and responsive to feedback and issues raised by the committee. I thank him along with Minister Coralee O'Rourke and Minister Shannon Fentiman, with whom I have the pleasure of working again this term with regard to my committee responsibilities, for their responsiveness. I would like to also take this opportunity to wish the new chair, the member for Thuringowa, the very best for the coming term as he continues this important work.

Mr Harper: Thank you very much. I learnt from the best.

Ms LINARD: Thank you. He is someone who served on that committee with me for the entirety of the last term. I know he is relishing the opportunity to continue to advance issues that he is very passionate about. I also want to wish the deputy chair, the member for Caloundra, the very best for this term as he continues in the role of deputy chair. Though we did not always see eye to eye, which no-one would expect, I always appreciated and admired the intellect and consideration he brought to the work of the committee.

It is with much relish that I sought to be and was happily appointed chair of the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee this term. This committee equally has responsibility for industrial relations, skills and training, all of which I am very passionate about. When I spent three years in a previous life in policing and corrective services policy, when reading and hearing firsthand the stories of those who find themselves caught up in our justice system it became very sadly evident that not everyone in this great state and country of ours has an equal opportunity at life. That is not to say that we are all victims.

Regardless of our circumstances we make choices and we live with the repercussions of those choices, but, to repeat a very powerful phrase often said, you cannot be what you cannot see. It reinforced for me in a very powerful way the transformative capacity of education. It has been said that education is the great equaliser, the most empowering force in the world. It creates knowledge, builds confidence, breaks down barriers to opportunity and allows one hope for a better future.

We have made tremendous advances in this country, but there is work still to be done to ensure that no child gets left behind: improving literacy and numeracy, making sure that every child can access vital early learning services such as kindy, engaging more children with disability in learning, re-engaging disengaged or at-risk youth in meaningful education to prepare them for the future and making sure we have the meaningful data to know where we are and where we are going.

For some children our schools also provide the only constant and safe place in their daily lives. While this is in itself a tragedy and one that moves me deeply as a mother, it provides opportunity and demands that we continue to look at in terms of how we can do better by vulnerable children across our community. Ultimately, we as a society are only as good and as just as how we treat our most vulnerable

members. I take this opportunity to applaud and thank all Queensland teachers, teacher aides, staff and volunteers who serve with such dedication, heart and vision in this vital area. I acknowledge my colleagues Grace Grace, the Minister for Education, and Di Farmer, the Minister for Child Safety and Youth, who serve so diligently in this vital area.

Equally so, the protections we afford workers in this state, the way that we value and reward work and the family unit, the availability of quality training and skills development to get people into work, to give people the dignity of work, are a key focus for me and have been for my entire working life and my tertiary study before that. As a country, we are facing sustained low wages growth, the ongoing challenge of gender pay parity, a culture of rampant unpaid overtime, casualisation and the impacts that all of these have on the family unit and any meaningful balance in our lives.

Do not get me wrong; we have seen positive change—hard fought for change. However, it seems ironic to me, given we live in a country that led the way in restricting working hours, starting in 1850, that we find ourselves having to once again increasingly defend them 168 years later. The divide across our country between rich and poor continues to grow and it continues to deepen. Job insecurity, cuts in real wages and underemployment are putting households under increasing strain. I see it across my community, and I see it across our country. We can and have to do better.

In addition to education and employment, I want to make some comments about women in the workplace and women in leadership. I am often asked by aspiring young women what it is like to be a woman in leadership. It is a topic I want to reflect on for those young women who ask the question, who will ultimately follow us into this place, but also for the many amazing women I come across in business and finance, in law and elsewhere who have shared their experiences and struggles.

Whether in politics or my roles in government or business before it, I have come to realise that women in leadership often have to pioneer something new because the pervasive system that we operate in is often not built for the different roles and challenges we face as women in leadership and the different priorities we often value. When I turned 30 and had my first baby, and my second at 33 prior to entering parliament, as a woman in senior roles, I began to discover that barriers do not always come in the most obvious form. Sometimes the barrier is not people's views but the system itself and what it rewards.

In 2011 and 2013, the years I had my children, when I returned to work the only option open to me to be a professional working mother who wanted to continue breastfeeding up to 12 months was to express milk in a toilet cubicle or the sick room, both when at the workplace and when at airports when travelling for work. The idea of mothers who return to work wanting to continue breastfeeding is hardly groundbreaking stuff. If we can move respectfully with the times here in this parliament, I know we can do so more broadly across our workplaces.

The absence of flexible work practices and the use of technology to make it work, accessibility of child care, rewarding efficiency and quality of work completed, rather than hours spent in the workplace and at after-hours networking functions when considering promotion are all barriers that many women continue to experience in the workplace and to positions of leadership. Professions such as education, health and creative arts that often attract women and provide the more flexible work arrangements they may seek often value their work at less than those in traditionally male dominated industries. While there is much talk about the importance of family and work-life balance, I do not think many of our systems of work, reward, and childcare accessibility in practice support what we say we value as a society, so there is work to be done.

I want to acknowledge the contribution that our Premier; Deputy Premier; state secretary; Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Tanya Plibersek; and many within our Labor movement have made to this particular discussion. I know that we, as a state Labor government are committed and up to the task and that we can and will achieve much for working women and Queensland families in partnership with a future Shorten led federal Labor government.

None of us come to this place by our singular effort; it takes a team, a community, and I would like to now thank mine. Affectionately named the 'Nudgee Mafia', I am the fourth generation of proud state members to serve our great party and my great community. Former members for Nudgee, Jack Melloy, Ken Vaughan and Neil Roberts, instilled in me a commitment to Labor values, Labor Unity and Nudgee. I would like to acknowledge each of them, but particularly so my campaign director and dear friend, Neil Roberts, my truest confidante; along with Reg Neil and Kim Flessor for their ongoing friendship and support.

I would like to acknowledge my field campaign coordinators, James and Bruce; communications coordinators, Jill, Michael and Walter; SEC president, Veronica; and fundraiser extraordinaire, Bob—all of whom I owe much. To Margaret and Bruce, who have letterboxed my entire electorate and, when

finished, then started again and again, I say thank you for wearing out the soles of your shoes for me and for what we believe in. Graham, what can I say? You are everywhere. No task is too big or too small.

I say thank you to my branch coordinators, Eli and Kulumba, and to every one of the branch members across my electorate who work at every fete and festival, mobile office, market and community information stall. I say thank you to the volunteers who sign up for one event or many. It truly takes a community.

We ran a strong and a positive campaign, focused on the future and focused on the community, and we did so in the face of a personal and negative campaign from the LNP candidate. It lacked vision, honesty and direction. My community deserved better. I say thank you to Neil Henderson and The Services Union, who have been alongside me since the day I first sought candidacy in 2012. I say a special thank you to my electorate office team, Natacha, Jill, Julz and Jemma, who work tirelessly for the people of Nudgee, and for me. To my gorgeous boys, Jordan and Ollie, and to my husband, Ian—there are not enough words.

I would like to also take this opportunity to make special mention of a powerhouse of the Australian Labor movement who will soon retire, Wayne Swan. Wayne Swan has been many things to many people in our movement: former deputy prime minister of our country, deputy leader of our party nationally, treasurer and finance minister of the year. However, to me and to my fellow colleagues, the members for Sandgate, Stafford, and Aspley, he is just 'Swannie'. He has been my federal member since I was 12. Frank in his assessments and astute in his advice, he is as formidable as he is loyal. Wayne, I say thank you for your personal support and for your service to our country, to our party and to our northside community. You will be sincerely missed.

In conclusion, I would like to end where I began, and that is by thanking the electors of Nudgee for the faith they have instilled in me to continue to serve and represent their interests in this place. I will do so sincerely.