




Speech By
Michael Hart

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

Record of Proceedings, 20 March 2018

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (6.50 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the address-in-reply tonight. Mr Deputy Speaker, could you pass on my congratulations to the Speaker of the House on his elevation to the very important role of Speaker in this House. I think he will do a fantastic job as Speaker of the Queensland parliament.

My thoughts and best wishes are tonight with the people of North Queensland who are recovering from the terrible floods they experienced. My thoughts are also with the people of New South Wales and Victoria who have been through terrible fires.

Many members in this place may not realise that I was born in Bega which is southern New South Wales. This is where the fires were. My initial involvement in surf lifesaving was as a nipper at Tathra Beach in 1966-67. I know that is a long time ago. That is where I was involved with Nippers. Southern New South Wales, especially the area around Tathra, is pristine. It is a beautiful area. This is a terrible tragedy. I have some very close family friends who still live there. I actually have relatives who live there. Tonight they do not know whether or not their houses are still there. They are going to have to get by for the next few weeks.

It is a real privilege to stand in this place for the third time and say that the people of Burleigh have elected me as their member. There are 50,000 people who live in the Burleigh electorate. There are 35,000 voters whom I represent and I will represent them to the best of my ability.

Burleigh has certainly changed since I was first elected. When I was first elected I think the electorate was about 34 or 35 square kilometres. Some of the regional members are going to say, 'Wow.' I can see the members for Burdekin and Gregory saying, 'It is only 35 square kilometres?'. The electorate has now shrunk to 20 square kilometres. While some members on both sides of the House have to fly across their electorates or drive, which takes them days, I can actually walk across my electorate in two or three hours. I am very privileged. It is hard to get into some of the high-rise buildings that are in my electorate.

Members of parliament cannot get elected without the people who assisted them in the election campaign. There are quite a few people who assisted me. I apologise in advance to the people whom I do not mention tonight in the short time I have before we automatically adjourn.

I would like to mention a few people. The people who really assist us are our family members, and I think all members in this House would agree with that. As far as my family goes, my main person is my wife, Sally. She has been my rock for 37 years. I also mention my children, Tim, Jessica and Hayden, and their respective partners, Aimie, Simon and Anna, and our wonderful grandchildren, Josh, Isla and Cam. We have another one on the way.

My wife has been nagging me for a while now saying that she needs to get rid of her Golf and wants a people mover because we are now going to have a fourth grandchild to carry around. That is something I am seriously considering. Without our family members there is no way we can do the job we do in this place and represent the 50,000 people who live in our electorates. People do not understand that there are actually more people who live in our electorates than can vote.

We have some vital people on our campaign teams. My campaign manager, David Pourre, did a fantastic job. I could not have done it without my treasurer, Gordon Galt, and my SEC secretary, Anthony Lind. I also had wonderful support from the Young LNP and the Bond University Liberal Club, led by Alec Pokarier. They were out there on weekends rain, hail and shine supporting me and helping me get elected. There is wonderful support from the Young LNP on the Gold Coast. I cannot thank them enough for the work they did in supporting me.

I especially wanted to mention Matt Taylor who worked in my electorate office and was a great help during this campaign. He was out at night putting out signs and doing all sorts of work that I really could not expect him to do. He was fantastic.

It would be remiss of me not to congratulate all members on being re-elected and all new members on being elected for the first time. I was listening to the speeches today and can say that most of them were fantastic. We cannot do this job without our wonderful staff. Out of the 93 members in this House, I have the best staff because they do things in—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr HART: I take the interjections from members saying that that is not correct. I have the best staff. Renee and Anna do a wonderful job in my electorate office. I can be wandering down the street in my electorate and people will come up to me and thank me for fixing something and I do not even know what they are talking about. These girls do such a wonderful job in my electorate office. They fix things. They communicate with ministers. They do the right thing by the people in my electorate. I am getting the praise off their backs. They are doing the work and I am the face of it. I really appreciate the work that these girls do.

On polling day I had over 100 workers out at polling booths. It was amazing to see the blue sea out there to get us elected. They did a wonderful job on the Gold Coast to the stage that we won every seat on the Gold Coast, except for one—and I really wish we had won that one as well. Unfortunately, we did not, but we will get it back at the next election.

We had over 8,800 people who voted before election day. It was amazing. Thirty per cent of the electorate voted before election day. I stood there for two weeks and I shook hands with every one of those 8,800 people. That is why I got 49.8 per cent of the primary vote in my electorate.

The staff at the ECQ did a wonderful job, led by Karen and her team. They were amazing with the amount of work that they did. In fact, on the last Thursday of the election 2,700 people came through the pre-poll. That is just amazing for pre-poll. I am sure that things are changing in the world of voting: people are not going out to vote on a Saturday. They were pre-polling for the whole two weeks before the election. The ECQ did a wonderful job. I have a great relationship with those people and they do a wonderful job.