



Speech By  
**Colin Boyce**


**MEMBER FOR CALLIDE**

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Record of Proceedings, 3 September 2019

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Conway, Ms S**

 **Mr BOYCE** (Callide—LNP) (7.25 pm): In rural Australia, mental health is a really big problem. Of the eight million Australians living in rural and remote areas, almost one million will suffer from poor mental health each year. Today I give credit to and acknowledge an inspirational young woman who is tackling the problem head-on, raising money the best way she knows how, that is, on the back of a horse. Twenty-two-year-old Sally Conway, born and bred in my home town of Taroom, has just tackled the longest and toughest horserace in the world, the Mongol Derby. Sally's quest is about starting conversations, changing attitudes and getting treatment and tools for people in rural Australia.

There is nothing else in the world like the Mongol Derby, riding semi-wild Mongolian horses. Changing horses every 40 kilometres, riders spend up to 14 hours a day in the saddle. If they do not reach their stations at night, they camp out with their horses, facing the elements and wild animals. It is impossible to train for the event. There are mountains, river crossings, wetlands, plains, sand dunes and feral dogs. The weather is extreme—anything from 40-degree heat without a breath of wind to arctic winds and sleeting snow. In Sally's words, if that sounds tough it is nothing compared to what thousands of rural men and women are battling with their mental health every day.

To survive the race, riders need skill, confidence, grit and determination, all of which Sally has in abundance. Arriving at station 18, in the lead, Sally suffered a severe dehydration event and was forced to make the decision to continue or lose her life. She sought medical attention and spent many days in hospital recovering, before rejoining the ride to complete the challenge. Sally's campaign, Ride with me—ride for Lee, aims to change the attitude towards mental health in Australia. All moneys raised go to the Royal Flying Doctor and the Rogue and Rouge Foundation. Well done, Sally Conway—a fantastic young Australian.