



Speech By  
**Hon. Craig Crawford**


**MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER**

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Record of Proceedings, 28 November 2019

### **MOTION OF CONDOLENCE**

**Tenni, Hon. MJ OAM**

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (9.44 am): As it has been said, Martin Tenni was born on 4 April 1934 in Cairns and so began a life of service to the people of Far North Queensland. When he was the owner of a hardware store in Mareeba, Martin decided to run for local council in 1970 to support other local businesses in the area. As it has been said, he served as chairman of Mareeba shire for three years before his election to parliament in 1974.

Martin was often described as a man who would not take no for an answer and would often defy backbenchers and other members of parliament when bills were not fit to represent the people of Cairns. He was later promoted to Joh Bjelke-Petersen's front bench as minister for environment, valuation and administrative services. During this time as minister, he was involved in pivotal decision-making around decentralisation of the environmental department, and this became one of the key issues he worked on during his time as minister.

Martin later became minister for water resources and maritime services in 1986 and then minister for mines and energy in 1987. Finally, he added northern development to his portfolios in 1989. During this time, Martin championed state ownership and lowering power prices for Queenslanders—something that members of this House to this day are still committed to. He was perhaps most notable for his continued lobbying for development of major infrastructure projects in the Far North. Indeed, you can see Martin Tenni's fingerprints all over the region—on projects like the Cairns Airport and James Cook University. He helped get electricity to islands in the Torres Strait, he got Smithfield high school built, and in 1987 he saved the Cairns courthouse building from demolition.

His retirement from parliament on 10 November 1989 did not end his advocacy for the town that he loved. He remained active within the National Party and continued to lobby for Cairns's fair share. In 2019 he was awarded an OAM for his work within the community and his long service to the Far North. Martin Tenni is a name synonymous with Far North Queensland. His important work in growing the region will be remembered for a long time. I personally want to thank Martin for helping shape the city that I now call home. He was the first state minister from the Far North—a legacy I am proud to carry and one that you, Mr Speaker, have also carried.

I extend my condolences to Mr Tenni's family, his wife, Dawn, and children, Wayne and Raelene. May his tenacity, drive and determination to make Far North Queensland a better place never be forgotten.