



Speech By  
**Jessica Pugh**


**MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY**

---

Record of Proceedings, 20 August 2019

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Organ Donation**

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (7.31 pm): Attending a funeral is always tough, but it is extra devastating when the person whose life you are celebrating was a young person. Over the parliamentary recess I attended two such funerals and came away from both with a strong message about organ donation that I want to share tonight.

Nicole Donaldson was a teacher at Centenary State High School. She looked after the school's major musical productions and she taught in the visually impaired unit. Nicole was a leader in the field in Queensland for visually impaired students. Indeed, there were countless former students at her funeral. One colleague from the visually impaired community commented, 'I've never met a sighted person who understood visual impairment like Nicole. Her loss is immeasurable and I don't know what we will do without her.'

Nicole was born with a heart defect and was not expected to live long, but day by day she proved the doctors wrong and went on to get a teaching degree and travel the world while teaching at her beloved Centenary State High School. She was on staff at Centenary from the year 2000—the year after it opened, meaning that almost every student who has ever attended the school was blessed to know Nicole.

Her brother gave a beautiful eulogy and commented that when Nicole knew her time on earth was coming to a close she was not ready to go. She still had more to do and more to give. Literally the last thing she did was give. She could not donate many organs, but she could donate her eyes and she did.

Earlier that week I attended the funeral of my father's best friend, Peter Mulvey, who thanks to a generous organ donor had lived with blood cancer for over 10 years. He was on the waiting list to receive a bone marrow transplant from a German donor when he passed away aged just 58. Dad was honoured to deliver his eulogy.

Nicknamed 'Perfect Pete' by his friends and family because of his propensity to keep an immaculate house and garden while spending lots of family time with his loving wife, Simone, and his daughters, Anna and Kate. Perfect Pete struck up an unlikely friendship with my potty mouthed, workaholic chef father and has given my dad such support through some very hard times. I also know that my dad is a better dad because of his friendship with Pete, who loved his daughters so and was not afraid to show it.

At Pete's funeral his daughter Kate made a heartfelt plea to all of us attending to raise awareness about the importance of organ donation. I am using my platform here today to amplify the message of a grieving daughter and friend. It is organ donation month and approximately 40 per cent of people do not tell their families if they would like to donate their organs. That means that when the time comes for families to decide they have no idea what to do. Studies show that the best way to lift organ donation

rates is to have the discussion with your family as they have the final say and they are very likely to respect your wishes as long as they know what they are. Remember, as Nicole showed, almost everyone can donate something. So tonight please send a simple text message to your family saying, 'I'm an organ donor—are you?'