




Speech By
Hon. Leanne Enoch

MEMBER FOR ALGESTER

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ADJOURNMENT

Algester Electorate, Harmony Day

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (7.15 pm): I strongly believe that our stories—who we are, where we come from, how we see the world—are the strongest things about us, and those stories are the greatest gifts we can give to and receive from each other as a community. It is in the honouring and valuing of our collective stories that our communities are made more inclusive, more compassionate and a richer place for us all. It is in our collective stories that we find a true narrative for our society, for what it means to be an Australian in a modern, connected world.

My electorate of Algester is proudly one of the most multicultural communities in our state, with many languages being spoken, many cultural practices being shared and of course different religions being followed. Each year I have the privilege of attending Harmony Day services across the Algester electorate where we celebrate the incredible diversity in our community. Each year, this day has been indeed a time to celebrate—to celebrate the magnificence of difference and to celebrate everything that connects us. This year, however, Harmony Day fell the week after the horrendous terrorist attack in Christchurch, New Zealand, where 50 innocent people were killed in their place of worship. This terrorist attack shook us all to the core and fundamentally punctured our collective story as Australians, leaving us all recognising that when hatred and prejudice go unchallenged, when they are fostered, the outcomes can be devastating. Consequently, this year's Harmony Day events of course reflected our collective sorrow and shock that something so horrible could happen so close to home and gave us all the opportunity to support each other and find a way to reset our story.

Algester electorate is home to Wisdom College, one of Queensland's many Islamic schools. This year for Harmony Day, Wisdom College held a peace ceremony at Algester mosque. Local school leaders from Calamvale Community College, St Stephen's Catholic Primary School, the Murri School and Stretton State College came together with Wisdom College, members of the Algester mosque and our broader community to show a community united against hate and violence, a community united in our determination for hope, compassion and kindness to be our compelling story. I acknowledge that the member for Stretton also attended. It was a powerfully human ceremony. The member for Stretton and I stood with students, teachers and family members and heard the emotion, fear and heartfelt attempts to make sense of what happened and what it meant for the future. Overwhelmingly, we heard the determination of the Algester community to heal our punctured story together and to promote kindness and compassion so that our continued story is one that values and honours the richness of diversity and ensures a bright future for all.