




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MACALISTER

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Macalister Electorate, Junior Sport

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (2.39 pm): My electorate of Macalister is based around the former regional township of Beenleigh. Many here in the House, particularly those representing outer urban areas, will recognise these types of towns—previous farming and trading pioneer outposts that also became boom areas in the postwar period. Young populations in that area meant schools, roads, civil infrastructure as well as junior sporting clubs flourished.

Two sporting clubs in Beenleigh are central. The Beenleigh Netball Association—the Beenleigh Bees—and the Beenleigh Junior Rugby League Football Club—the Beenleigh Lions. In Queensland—certainly the Queensland that I grew up in—they were the two sports we could play at school. While kids these days have a lot more options, netball and Rugby League are still the predominant junior sports in Macalister. When I was first elected I made it a priority to meet with these two clubs. I was dismayed to find that the club facilities were well below par. Whilst the netball courts themselves are first class and the two footy fields are a credit to the team of volunteers that curate them, the club facilities—the bricks and mortar—are well over 30 years old and many parts of them are no longer serviceable.

My passion for junior sports and, in particular, girls participating in sport is something I proudly wear on my sleeve. While female participation in netball is significant, as honourable members would expect, I would like to acknowledge the work of the Beenleigh Lions, who have one of the largest representation of girls playing footy in South-East Queensland. The club boasts five girls teams competing in various grades and age levels—in total, over 100 registered girls playing footy. The sad reality for these teams is that the facilities are just not up to scratch for the 21st century. Providing adequate change facilities for women and girls is key to increasing female sporting participation. In a society where we face growing health concerns and childhood obesity rates, we must look at every avenue to keep all people active and participating.

These clubs are run by a team of dedicated volunteers and management, the type that dig into their own pockets to pay registration fees for kids whose families are doing it tough. For decades they have focused on access to sport and not fancy clubhouses. I am more than pleased to advocate and fight for funding for these clubs so they can focus on what they do best: providing sporting opportunities for kids.

I was pleased to be joined by our federal Labor candidate for Forde, Des Hardman, and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Tanya Plibersek, to announce a federal Labor commitment of \$2.45 million to build a new joint clubhouse for these clubs. The clubhouse will provide players from both clubs with new change rooms and showering facilities, first aid and officials facilities. It will provide administrative and operations facilities, function rooms and clubhouse social space to host events. This represents the biggest investment in these two clubs since their current clubhouses were built in the 1980s.

I would like to thank our federal candidate, Des Hardman, for securing this commitment. I would like to thank the community for getting behind this commitment. I know that when it comes to Saturday, they will be making the right choice for Hammel Park.