



Speech By  
**Scott Stewart**


**MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE**

---

Record of Proceedings, 26 February 2019

**MOTION**

**Natural Disasters**

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (3.28 pm): Today I begin by expressing my condolences to the parents of the two young boys who were tragically lost in the Ross River overnight. Many of us in the chamber are parents or grandparents and I am sure that we feel the sorrow of this tragic loss, but in some small way I would like to think that the parents may take comfort from our collective heartfelt thoughts and prayers for them.

I want to thank every minister, every member and every single person who has conveyed, in some way, their well wishes to those of us who live in Townsville who were victims of the recent flooding event. Just last week in fact we received in the mail a \$20 note from a D Maxwell from Ravenswood in Tasmania who sent the legal tender with a simple note attached: 'For the flood victims.' Thank you, Mr or Ms Maxwell. Your kind donation will help someone who has lost everything.

There is no doubt that generosity and compassion is far reaching in my Townsville community. During the last sitting week of this parliament, I thanked all of those who helped and I also shared stories of generosity from strangers—people randomly handing out sandwiches, rolls, muffins, water and coffee on a 35-degree day. The strength of my community welded together strangers who knew that they could depend on each other.

On Friday, I joined His Excellency the Governor of Queensland when he thanked all of those from the local disaster management committee for doing their work during the floods. His Excellency also met with several Townsville City Council truck drivers who rescued many stranded people using their dump trucks to ferry people to safety. Earlier in the week I travelled to Richmond and co-signed the carcass disposal management plan agreement with the mayors of the Winton, Richmond, Flinders, Cloncurry and McKinlay shires. This plan will see shires making the best decisions with local graziers on how best to safely dispose of the dead cattle owing to the floods in their area. The key to this program is empowering local majors.

I also take this opportunity to thank my family. I thank my son, Lachlan, who, at the age of 19, sandbagged and cleaned houses with me for about a week and a half. He worked like an absolute trooper. I am very proud of my young man. I also thank my daughter, Jordan, who, despite being evacuated for 10 days and living with us and then we got evacuated, also worked with me and sandbagged for hours and hours. I have to tell members that she worked like a man as well. She was fantastic. I also thank my nephew, Ryan Attard, who could not get back to the Burdekin. He helped sandbag and clean houses. I thank my neighbours Andrew and Matthew Mee and Dylan, their sister's partner, who sandbagged houses for neighbours. I also thank my mate Matt, who lives two doors down. He served his country, but now he has lost everything. He is struggling with his own issues now. I say to Matt: mate, I am with you and, if you need to talk, I will be there. Matt is not alone. We are going through this together.

*(Time expired)*