




Speech By
Aaron Harper

MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA

Record of Proceedings, 20 February 2020

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Police Charity Ball, Townsville Hospital Foundation

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.22 pm): Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I note your nice tie! In December last year we three Townsville MPs—I joined yourself and the member for Mundingburra—attended the second annual police charity ball at Brothers Rugby League Club in my electorate of Thuringowa. This is an excellent event where our hardworking local police and, importantly, their families get to relax, but their aim is to raise funds for the Townsville Hospital Foundation and the children's oncology ward. On that point, I commend a veteran police officer in Townsville, Inspector Roger White, for his work and the entire organising team for the effort they put into making this event a success. Last year, my wife, Amanda, purchased this jacket on our wedding anniversary. As an aside, she actually purchased it from Hermit Park, from New Park Menswear. That facility had been flooded but now is back up on its feet. It is good to support local business.

Amanda said to me, 'Look, I want you to stand out,' but I needed to wear something newer than my previous pink floral jacket that I wore in this House in 2015 to raise money for the hospital foundation. I do not mind bringing some colour into the parliament for a good cause. I never back away from a challenge.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr HARPER: I only got to wear it once. During that police charity ball, there were auctions. I was asked to come up on stage where I found out that a trap had been set for me to become a live auction—the jacket anyway. Then I had to model said jacket to the delight and pleasure of the local police and their partners. A dare was put up by local copper TJ, Tony Jacobs, who I know is putting in for the OIC at Rollingstone Police Station. Incidentally, in 2016 I ran a night shift with him at the QPS RAP Hub in Thuringowa. As a result, we got an additional 20 officers to boost it to 40. TJ said to me, 'I dare you and I will pay you \$500 to purchase the jacket if you wear it to parliament.' We will donate that money to the Townsville Hospital Foundation and he will become the new owner of the jacket. TJ, this one is for you. I am pleased to say that not only will your money make a difference but the members for Mundingburra, Barron River, Rockhampton, Redlands, Nudgee, Waterford, Maryborough, Gaven, Miller and the Premier of Queensland—who always supports us in North Queensland—have helped me raise an additional \$1,000. This takes the total amount that the police charity people will donate to the Townsville Hospital Foundation to \$20,000. I think that deserves a 'Hear, hear!' Well done to our local coppers.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: A very stylish tie; you have great taste!