




Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR MILLER

Record of Proceedings, 2 December 2020

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Mulherin, Hon. TS

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (3.28 pm): I rise to support the condolence motion for Tim Mulherin. I first met Tim in 1993. I was a young, fresh faced candidate for the Moorooka Ward in the Brisbane City Council election and Tim was my party organiser. He was trustworthy, committed, effective and easy to work with. He did not stay organiser for long because when Casey retired he took over the seat of Mackay and subsequently had an incredible career for 20 years, after working in the power industry beforehand.

Tim brought his well-developed values into this place and he put them to work. He saw those in other parties as opponents but not enemies. He was not a hater, and he always put others first throughout his life. Gary Highland was one of Tim's close friends. Gary's tribute to Tim after his passing captures Tim's character better than I can—

Whenever someone expressed cynicism to me about politicians, I would say, 'Ah, you obviously haven't met my mate, Tim Mulherin' Tim was one of the kindest, most generous and truly selfless people I have ever known.

All he ever wanted to do was to help people and make his city of Mackay and the world a better place. He saw politics as the best vehicle for doing this. His family can be so proud of all he achieved and how he went about this. He was such great company. You could have the deepest conversation with him and then the biggest laugh all in the space of an afternoon.

Tim did not have the opportunity to go to university, but he had a lifelong fascination and curiosity with public affairs and specifically agriculture and agricultural economics. As others have said, his family history goes back to the agricultural history of the region. He was well read. He was always curious and, as has been well said, he could talk to a PhD or the local mechanic and he would bring equal curiosity and openness to the conversation.

While he did not get to Gatton college, Tim of course would make a major contribution to Queensland agriculture as the minister for more than two terms under two premiers. He loved being able to bring people together, as has well been mentioned—people who did not necessarily come from the same background or who were not on the same page—to get an outcome.

I would especially like to acknowledge Tim's commitment to justice and the advancement of First Nation people and the South Sea islander community and his support of arts in Mackay as well, including his championing of the relocation and enhancement of the conservatorium of music, as recounted to me this morning by the then arts minister, Matt Foley.

After Tim's encounter, as has well been recounted, out west with the curry and the hospital, most people would have departed politics to look after themselves after such a close shave—but not Tim. Labor headquarters, after no doubt some dire political research at the time, asked him to run again for Mackay as they believed, quite rightly, that only Tim could hold that seat for Labor at the 2012 state election. True to his selfless approach to life, Tim put aside his own health issues and agreed to run again and did hold his seat amidst the political maelstrom that rained down on Labor in March 2012.

He became the deputy leader of the parliamentary Labor Party with seven MPs, as has well been recounted by the Premier. His effectiveness was profound. His 20 years of parliamentary experience and corporate knowledge was invaluable to turning seven members into a first-term Palaszczuk Labor government.

Very few people would have a bad word to say about Tim Mulherin, and that is not something you could say about many people. The fact that this is the longest speaking list that I ever recall on a condolence motion in the six years I have been here says much about Tim and his contribution to this place.

I am very fortunate to be able to say that Tim was a loyal and good friend over 27 years. He was a Labor true believer who had an immeasurably positive impact on countless lives through his work, contributing fully and profoundly to the last day of his service as an MP and also to his last days in his subsequent post-MP role as chair of the regional HHS board.

Of course the greatest and most profound loss on Tim's passing is for his family and friends. He was a great family man. His wife, Erin, who is here with us today, played a crucial role—and I would like to acknowledge that—in Tim's contribution to our state of Queensland, holding the fort, supporting their family and supporting him when he was away for long periods.

I acknowledge Erin; his mother, Helen; his brothers and sisters; his other family members and friends; and his sons—Declan, Liam and Rory. I offer my sincerest condolences on Tim's passing. Vale Tim Mulherin. He deserved much longer. Our community, our state and ourselves are all better for his life.