



Speech By  
**Rob Molhoek**


**MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT**

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## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **Homelessness**

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (6.22 pm): For some time now the Gold Coast has been wrestling with the heart-wrenching challenges of homelessness and, in some cases, the associated challenge of antisocial behaviour. I realise these are universal and, to be frank, somewhat timeless issues. In my younger years I was directly involved in supporting a youth rehabilitation program in Broken Hill where we created not-for-profit social enterprise businesses to accommodate and support young people in the old nun's quarters of the convent.

Over the years, addressing the issue of homelessness has been a passion for me. I am proud to have been the ambassador for the Gold Coast CEO Sleepout, now in its sixth year, and I have had the privilege of travelling to New York to visit Common Ground and meet with its founder, Rosanne Haggerty. Members will remember that the LNP supported the establishment of Common Ground here in South Brisbane which has been a great success. I am also pleased to see that the state's second youth foyer will be established in Southport shortly—another great program inspired by Ruth Knight, a passionate Gold Coaster and advocate for disadvantaged young people.

According to the 29 April report from the Gold Coast response team, a coalition of Gold Coast agencies led by the department of housing, there are 664 households—1,100 individuals—identified and registered as at risk, with 210 households identified as visibly homeless. From Coolangatta to Coomera there are now 79 hotspots. Two of these hotspots are in Southport's CBD. Between them, they account for about 28 people. The people of Southport and I are just so frustrated. In spite of months of increased activity by local police, workshops, community forums and the appointment of a response team attached to Public Housing, very little has changed. It just seems ludicrous to me that, with the immense resources of the Queensland government and its departments and the many agencies that we fund, this small handful of people still has not been helped.

Last Sunday evening I joined yet another outreach team on its rounds. We fed about 50 people. That team was led by Andrea Simmons, who heads up the Australian Anti Ice Campaign. I spoke personally with about eight individuals, many of whom I know. They are falling into the cracks because of significant challenges within our mental health legislation, as a result of human rights legislation and just the complex issues around mental health generally. My heart aches for these people and I am torn, because on the one hand we need to do better for them but on the other I have to look after the best interests of the 20,000 people who live in Southport. We need to look after their concerns and address their wellbeing.