




Speech By  
**Hon. Dr Steven Miles**  
**MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA**

---

Record of Proceedings, 2 December 2020

## MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

### Mulherin, Hon. TS

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning) (2.42 pm): On 7 September we lost a great leader, a great friend and a champion for Queensland and for his beloved Mackay. As you can tell from the contributions already made on this condolence motion, he was much loved within the Labor Party and respected on both sides of the aisle. Our thoughts continue to be with Erin, Declan, Liam and Rory and their extended family.

Tim Mulherin was someone who embodied the best of our movement and he continued making a contribution to Queensland until the very end. Tim served the Queensland people for 20 years as the member for Mackay, over six years as a minister in the Beattie and Bligh governments and three years as deputy leader of the state parliamentary Labor Party, time the Premier has already reflected on. He spent his life advocating for working people, particularly those in rural and regional Queensland.

I was very fortunate to work with Tim in his role as the board chair of the Mackay Hospital and Health Service after he had retired from politics. I got to see up close how hard he worked for the people of Mackay and how proud he was of that health service, in particular of his contribution to the Mackay Base Hospital and to the wonderful staff of the Mackay HHS. Tim's advocacy for his community and for world-class hospitals and health care in the Mackay region has made health care better for every person who lives there.

Tim's lifelong commitment to, and respect for, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Australian South Sea islander people was especially evident in every part of his public service and his time as chair of the Mackay health service. The signing of a statement of commitment to reconciliation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in 2018 remained one of his proudest moments, as was the creation of the KemKem Yanga midwifery group practice to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers birthing at the Mackay Base Hospital. Tim was, on the Friday before he passed away, assisting us still with the recruitment process for a new chief executive of the health service.

Some earlier speakers have recounted their text messages from Tim. You, Mr Speaker, spoke of your last conversations and that prompted me to search back on my phone and see the messages Tim had been sending throughout the year. All of them started with a very detailed recount of his treatment and how his health had been and were ever hopeful, ever optimistic, and then he would turn to the real reason he was texting me. He would say, 'You might want to consider' and that would be a useful piece of advice about how I could do my job better—usually something very obvious that I should have already thought of.

His passing is a great loss to Queensland, to the great Australian Labor Party, to Mackay and to all those who knew and loved him. The words he spoke in his first speech in this place in 1995 ring as true about Mackay today as they did 25 years ago. He said that Mackay's greatest strength is her people. Vale, Tim Mulherin.