




Speech By
Ali King

MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE

Record of Proceedings, 2 December 2021

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT

Freeman, Mrs PT

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (2.54 pm): Today I rise to remember an unforgettable lady, Pauline Terese Freeman. Pauline was a passionate true believer and known alongside her husband as one half of the eternal duo, Pauline and Paul, because they were always, always together. I welcome Paul and the couple's son Abel to the gallery today and acknowledge Paul's dedicated care for Pauline over many years.

The two pillars of Pauline's life were her family and the great Australian Labor Party. Pauline was a staunch ALP life member, joining the Maryborough branch in 1989. From the outset, Pauline was determined to contribute in any way she could, and so she did—running the Mungar Junction rail booth for that year's election all day and then scrutineering late into the night as her very first campaign. It was this kind of determined grassroots campaigning that saw Labor win Maryborough from the Nationals that year. Pauline quickly became the treasurer of her branch. She campaigned hard for families to be kept safe by mandatory smoke detectors and established the first Young Labor branch outside of Brisbane. Pauline knew everyone in our Labor family, from our Queensland senators to Bob Hawke, and photos of her with all of them had places of honour on the walls of her home at Bongaree. I was so honoured to have Pauline and Paul's heartfelt support in my election campaign. Despite her frail health, Pauline did high-vis, showed up at pre-poll with her walker and regularly took skin off LNP volunteers with her acerbic comments—always delivered very sweetly.

Pauline's parents migrated from Galway in Ireland and Pauline credited her fierce commitment to social justice to her proud Irish heritage. Personally, I think Pauline's passion for social justice ran deeper than blood and found its roots in her devastating life experiences and her own unique spark. Pauline always shared her story openly to help others. Her experience of sexual assault as a young teenager tragically led to a coerced adoption, as was so common in the 1960s and 1970s. Pauline felt that fate took a hand in reuniting her with her firstborn child, and it is testament to her character that Pauline went on to train as an adoption and family reunification counsellor to help other families through these tough experiences.

As important as politics was to Pauline, she was also a passionately dedicated mother, wife and community member. Pauline was at her happiest when she had her children living under her roof. She volunteered tirelessly on their P&Cs, managed their footy teams and sewed their callisthenics outfits. She also deeply and sincerely supported Paul as he worked through his traumatic experiences as a Timor-Leste veteran. Pauline leaves behind a proud legacy of six loving children and 16 grandchildren, a Bribie Island Labor family that will never forget her fiery, sparkling, mischievous character and her wicked twinkle. Vale, Pauline Freeman.