




Speech By
Ann Leahy

MEMBER FOR WARREGO

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT

Warrego Electorate, Weather Event

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (2.19 pm): I extend my deepest sympathy to the family and friends of the 73-year-old man from Roma in my electorate who sadly lost his life at Oakey in the floodwaters. Roma has lost a community champion.

The community of Inglewood have not seen flood levels which they experienced this week since 1976. It is a frightening experience to get that knock on the door at night asking for you to get your belongings and evacuate. It is a difficult experience during the day, but it is absolutely frightening when it comes at 10 o'clock at night.

Mayor Lawrence Springborg spent the night with the people of Inglewood, and I thank him for doing so. I especially want to thank the chair of the Goondiwindi LDMG, Councillor Rick Kearney, for the great job that he has done with little sleep, as have all the councillors in the Goondiwindi Regional Council and their staff.

Inglewood, Yelarbon and surrounds are cleaning up today. They are cleaning up the slippery, smelly mud from their homes and businesses. On behalf of the LNP opposition, I want to thank all of the volunteers involved in the clean-up—the rural fire brigades, the council staff, the neighbours who have come forward to help neighbours.

Goondiwindi and Texas are anxiously waiting for their rivers to peak. This water will take several days to make its way to Mungindi in my electorate. Communities along the Condamine-Balonne system await the water from Warwick, Dalby, Chinchilla and Miles as it makes its way through the townships of Condamine—who I add were evacuated twice in the 2010-11 flood events—Surat, St George and Dirranbandi. They are awaiting that water to make its way to them. Communities such as Goondiwindi and Mungindi are protected by levee banks and hopefully these banks will do their job and keep the floodwaters out of the town and away from floorboards.

Queensland is one of the most disaster-prone states in the country. Only three per cent of the funding goes towards the prevention of disasters and the other 97 per cent goes to recovery. Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different outcome is not responsible. We will always have floods, bushfires and cyclones. There needs to be change. Floodwaters can be prevented. The focus needs to be on prevention, be it a levee bank, be it lifting homes or be it better drainage. Flood mitigation involves a suite of different measures.

Just a couple of weeks ago, the community of Roma came close to a 2010 flood event. The levee bank was engaged and the diversion channel took the water away from the house yards and the floorboards. It worked just as it should.

I call on the state Labor government to work harder to protect these flood-prone communities and help the local governments with this task of keeping communities safe.