




Speech By
Bruce Saunders

MEMBER FOR MARYBOROUGH

Record of Proceedings, 2 September 2021

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Pegg, Mr D

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (4.33 pm): As was the case for the member for Pine Rivers, this is one of the hardest speeches I have ever had to make in this House. I never thought I would have to make it. I always said to Duncan that I wanted him to say good things about me!

I first met Duncan Pegg when I ran for the seat of Keppel. At my street stall this young bloke came up and I said, 'Send me a letter'—there were no emails in those days—and he did. In Western Queensland terms, I was flogged by the Hon. Vince Lester. I would reflect on that letter. If I had followed what was sent to me back then by that young man, I might have won the seat because, even then, quite obviously I was doing the campaign wrong. I have kept following Duncan's life through his union and Labor history.

In about 2010, my daughter was having problems with a company. Of course, they would not allow her to be in a union. I rang up the great Con Sciacca and said, 'Con, I need a bloke to defend my daughter.' He said, 'Yeah, look, I'm busy at the moment but I'll call you back tomorrow.' The next morning he rang me back and said, 'I've got this bloke. He's the best.' I said, 'Who is he?' He said, 'He's Duncan Pegg.' I said, 'He's still in high school.' He said, 'Look, he's the best.' Consequently, Duncan and my daughter won the case. Duncan was getting my daughter to do a lot of the work. I rang him up and said, 'Listen, Duncan, I know you're a solicitor and I'm paying you all this money but you're making her do all the work.' He said, 'She'll learn from it.' He won the case resoundingly. I look at my youngest daughter now. She is a union organiser. I thank Duncan every day because she would not be in the position she is now without Duncan Pegg.

Then he ran in the 2015 election. My daughter was living in his electorate so we plastered her fence with 'Duncan Pegg' signs. After the election I rang him and we had a bit of a chat, and I reminded him of the letter he sent me after my dismal failure in Keppel.

In 2015 I nominated for the seat of Maryborough. The first person to ring me after the health minister came up to announce my preselection for the seat of Maryborough was Duncan Pegg. He said, 'What are you doing? You can't win that seat. There's 11 per cent of the vote.' I said, 'I think I'm going to win it, mate.' He said, 'You're an optimist!' We kept in constant contact throughout the campaign. On the night of the election, when we knew we were going to win but could not announce it, the first call I took was from Duncan Pegg to congratulate me. He said, 'I didn't believe you could do it.'

We came here together—the class of 2015. Then we formed the champagne club. As the member for Beaudesert said, I thought I had the numbers to be the president of the champagne club. I thought I was in. I texted my wife and said that I would be the new president of the champagne club, but I was rolled by Duncan. I will never forget it. I never thought the member for Pine Rivers would vote against me, but I did not do the numbers too well!

Every day I come into this House I look for Duncan. I have not deleted his number from my phone. I still pick up the phone some days and think, 'Will I ring him? I want to ask him.' Although he was a lot younger than me, he gave me some good advice. He always had a solution for every problem, every time I rang him. I rang him constantly throughout the 2017 campaign because we were under a lot of pressure. He was always there for me. I really appreciated every bit of advice I received from Duncan. I said to him, 'An old bloke like me taking advice from a young bloke like you?' He was as smart as a whip. He was an unbelievable person. I do not say this too often to anyone, but Duncan Pegg was an absolute champion of a man. You could see from the way he was raised—and condolences to the Pegg family—his principles and the great bloke that Duncan was. Not only will we in this place miss him; the whole of Queensland will miss him because he was destined for bigger and better things.

I went out for dinner with Duncan in Stretton. He was so popular. When he drove me back to the House I said, 'Don't come to Maryborough. You're not doing numbers on me! You're banned.' Then the member for Cook and I got a lift to the Gold Coast. When we got out of the car he said to me, 'Do you want a lift back?' I said, 'No, I'd rather walk back rather than go back with you.' He was not the best driver! I honestly think Duncan was one of the greatest blokes I have ever met. I will really miss you, mate.