




Speech By
James Martin

MEMBER FOR STRETTON

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MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Pegg, Mr D

 **Mr MARTIN** (Stretton—ALP) (3.20 pm): I rise to pay tribute to a great man, a great Labor member of parliament and a great mate, Duncan Pegg, the former member for Stretton. I was proud to count Duncan as one of my closest friends. He was an amazing person, supremely intelligent, successful, sharp, loyal to his mates but also a true egalitarian evidenced by the fact that he made friends with almost everyone he encountered and Duncan certainly had a lot of friends.

I first met Duncan at Griffith University over 20 years ago when I signed up to the Labor Club. Pretty soon after we met it was clear to me that he was an incredibly talented individual. He had drive and focus and seemingly no fear. He was a brilliant strategist with an uncanny insight to instantly assess a situation. Once he put his mind to something, his resilience was legendary. He took on all comers and kept on winning. He wanted to help people and give them a fair go, particularly those from poorer backgrounds. That resilience would be a feature of his life; a quality that he would deploy on behalf of those he represented as a lawyer, union official and member of parliament.

Looking back I think his stand-out ability was to inspire those around him, to assemble a team of people passionate about the Labor cause and to work together to win and remain loyal to each other. I think it was clear to a lot of us back in those days that Duncan would end up in politics. None of us thought his journey would come to an end the way it did. I think he had much more to give.

After graduating, Duncan worked for Sciaccas Lawyers and then joined the National Union of Workers. In both cases he actively helped working people and achieved some fantastic outcomes. There he also met two of his biggest mentors: the late great the Hon. Con Sciacca, from whom he picked up his love of Cuban cigars, and Greg Moran from the National Union of Workers who had a similar political mind.

In 2011, a 30-year-old Duncan decided to enter politics. While he, like many other hardworking Labor candidates, was not successful in 2012, he ran again in 2015 and was elected as the member for Stretton, successfully defending the seat in 2017 and 2020. On each of those occasions Duncan achieved swings towards him. That is a testament to his ability both to forge real and genuine friendships across all sections of the community and to deliver real policy outcomes for Stretton.

Duncan was fearless in coming forward when his community was under attack. When anti-mosque leaflets were delivered in our local area and 'no mosque' signs were put up on Warrigal Road, Duncan spoke out in this place in support of the rightful and equal place Muslim people have in our community. Those signs were taken down. When the Brisbane City Council shut Illaweena Street without notice, Duncan leapt into action and unleashed the Stretton mums on the Lord Mayor and the local councillor. Illaweena Street was opened.

When his own love of strawberry milk came under attack by his political opponents, Duncan took direct action and proudly and publicly stood up in defence of his favourite beverage. Further, he was not afraid to make the tough calls when it came to sweet treats, publicly calling out the white chocolate

Tim Tam for what it was: the worst Tim Tam ever! Duncan had a great sense of humour and did not take himself too seriously. He loved being the member for Stretton. He loved the community there and the community loved him back.

Duncan first announced his diagnosis in this House in November 2019. That revelation changed the personal worlds of so many of us sitting here and so many people beyond this chamber. Cancer is cruel and unfair. Duncan originally went to the doctor for a check-up for a sore shoulder. He had no symptoms of bowel cancer. He was 39 years old and in the prime of his life. It was a shocking moment for Duncan and for all those who knew him.

Throughout his treatment, Duncan chose to carry on with life on his terms. He continued to fight for his community even while fighting cancer. The resilience that I first saw in Duncan years before was on full display over the past 18 months of his life. Throughout his treatment he continued his duties in his electorate, attending events and functions, and meeting with residents. Up until two weeks before he passed away he was still booking in meetings.

Duncan was supported by an amazing family: his mother, Lindsey, his dad, Graham, and his brothers, Grant, Graham Jr, Cameron and Lachlan. The Pegg family rallied around their son and brother. To them I say: I hope you know what an incredible legacy Duncan has left in this place, in the community and on the many friends he made along the way.

Since Duncan passed a number of local sports clubs have named awards in his honour: the Duncan Pegg Best Batsman Award from the Brisbane Super Kings—he would have liked that one—and the yearly Club Spirit Award from Donald Swimming, to name just two. More are on the way and I will be sure to keep this House advised.

To the Pegg family, I know you are still grieving and I hope you know that we are all here for you. You will always be part of the Stretton family.

Duncan was a lot of fun. He was a storyteller. He could tell those stories for hours and I am sure many people in this House have listened to them. Above all, Duncan had a genuine affection for people and loved his life. It is an easy thing to say, but subject to the constraints we all have—time, money and health—he really did live his life to the full. I do not think he could have packed any more into his schedule, met many more people or helped others more than he did. He attacked life with charisma and flair, and not a day was wasted even in the last weeks of his life.

Duncan's last piece of advice to me was that I would have to run my own race. I will, mate, but you will always be part of my story and the story of so many others you helped along the way. Duncan, you left big shoes to fill and I will work as hard as I can every day to carry on your legacy. We miss you, mate.