



Speech By
Kim Richards

MEMBER FOR REDLANDS

Record of Proceedings, 13 May 2021

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (4.50 pm): I rise to give my address-in-reply. I begin by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, the Jagera and Turrbal people, and pay my respects to elders of all cultures, those past and those whose wisdom guides us into the future. I would also like to acknowledge the First Peoples of my home, the Quandamooka people, one of the world's oldest continuing living cultures who have, for over 20,000 years, cared for the lands, winds and waters of our stunning Quandamooka coast.

It is an extraordinary privilege to be returned to this place for a second term. I express my deepest gratitude and thanks to the people of Redlands for allowing me again the honour of representing our community. It is and will always be one of the greatest honours of my life. I congratulate the Premier, the Deputy Premier and all the members in this House on their return. I welcome all of the new members and thank those members who were not returned for their service to the people of Queensland. As the member for Chatsworth pointed out, there are a limited number of names on the honour board of the Legislative Assembly and those who come and go provide an incredible service to the people of Queensland.

My first term of two years and 10 months felt like it flew by in a moment. A large part of the back end of that was set amidst probably the greatest challenge any of us could ever have imagined with the global pandemic of COVID-19. I am proud to have been part of the Palaszczuk Labor government that kept Queenslanders and my Redlands community safe throughout the pandemic and as we continue our journey in recovery.

I also take this opportunity to thank my Redlands community for the way in which they have approached every aspect of dealing with the pandemic and the fundamental changes it has brought to the way we live our lives. It has brought such significant change. Our spirit of community in the Redlands is second to none and never did it shine more brightly than it did in 2020. Our community organisations were amazing across the board. Our government, local government and the community worked together to make sure that we kept each other safe.

As I said in my maiden speech of 2018, to the people of Redlands, to those who voted for me and those who did not, I want to reaffirm my promise and commitment to them that I will continue to be a strong voice for our community. I will listen, I will engage, I will work hard. I will bring respect and I will fight for the needs of my unique electorate of beautiful islands and a rapidly changing mainland. The people of Redlands have again put their faith, hope and trust in me and in our Labor team to continue to deliver for Redlands and, indeed, for all Queenslanders. I want my Redlands community to know that I will always represent them in the best interests of our collective community. They will continue to be at the centre of my thoughts and at the heart of my activities and representations in this role as their member in the 57th Parliament, just as they were in the 56th Parliament.

I also said in my maiden speech that I believed a measure of one's success in this place was the legacy ultimately left behind. I am proud of the work achieved in my first term. It is a legacy well underway which includes, in roads and infrastructure, the \$110 million stage 1 upgrade of

Cleveland-Redland Bay Road, a highly politicked road for decades. That upgrade is much needed and will help transform and bust congestion in my community. Last week I had the pleasure of announcing the contractors that have been appointed for the \$34.1 million Southern Moreton Bay Islands ferry terminals. These will create the most incredible gateways to our islands. They will be transformative. It is long overdue and will be embraced by not only locals but also those people coming to visit as we continue to transition into a tourism based economy.

I am also proud of working closely with Minister Bailey to secure free Southern Moreton Bay Islands inter-island travel. It is important for our island community to remain connected. At times they can be isolated. The cost of living can be high on an island. For residents to be connected and to be able to go freely from Russell Island to Macleay Island or Macleay Island to Karragarra Island is an important service that the Palaszczuk government is supporting. I was also pleased that we introduced the community grants packages. We have had two rounds. In the first round there was \$2.5 million allocated. Works are nearly complete on the Southern Moreton Bay Island Green Seal program. There are still more works to do into the future but we have been able to support Redland City council on delivering those works for my community.

It is an absolute privilege to be chairing the Education, Employment and Training Committee. I cannot think of a greater honour. Education is what changes our world. It is part of any legacy that you leave behind.

We have achieved much work across our schools. I do not think there is a school that has not been touched, from air conditioning and solar for all Redland schools, which is well underway, to the \$3 million Victoria Point State High School library and hall upgrade. This was a high school that had not had much love shown to it and was left behind by another high school in the Oodgeroo electorate. The work has created a flexible new learning space and digitalised library for the school. The hall is something they are so proud of. I had the chance to watch the leaders' induction and be part of the official opening of the hall. It was incredible to see the pride on the faces of the students, teachers and parents.

A few weeks ago I visited the new administration building at the Thornlands State School. It is an absolute transformation. There is a lot of heritage building listed there. The administration building was one of those tired, daggy, old spaces, in particular for new families to come into. It was fantastic to see how excited the staff, the principal, the deputy principal, the teachers and the families who were bringing their children in were.

We did a \$500,000 upgrade of the administration and library building at Macleay Island State School; there was \$1.2 million for Russell Island State School classroom refurbishments; and \$9 million worth of work is well underway at the Redlands District Special School. That school is close to my heart. I do not think I stopped talking about it in the 56th Parliament. It is an incredible school. Principal Thompson is amazing. The teachers, the teacher aides and the support staff are doing the most incredible job with the most beautiful students.

We built \$1.6 million worth of new classrooms at Redland Bay State School; \$700,000 worth of new classrooms at Bay View State School; Cleveland District State High School had \$18 million worth of work done on it; and there was \$2.4 million for the YMCA vocational school and youth club—a brand new facility that is transformative in providing alternate options for education to make sure that every young Redlander gets the best opportunity to live their best possible life through education. We have the Redland TAFE at Alexandra Hills with \$15 million for a new nursing building. There is new plumbing underway and resources for trades. We have been focused on how we deliver education for our community, including free TAFE for year 12 graduates and free apprenticeship and training costs.

In hospital and health care we have secured the \$50 million new hospital multistorey car park which is so badly needed and is a huge addition; the design work is underway on a \$62 million new intensive care unit and 32-bed ward; we completed the \$1.7 million emergency expansion and state-of-the-art maternity and birthing ward; and we have a \$6 million hospital expansion business case underway to look at making sure we futureproof the hospital into the future.

One of my proudest achievements is the \$40 million new satellite hospital, which we have done the site evaluation on. That will make a significant difference to my community. There are challenges to living on an island and to access health services you need to travel to the mainland and back again. To have that service located at Weinam Creek near the marina will be extraordinary for so many in our community.

Turning to jobs and economic development, it was lovely to MC the small business reception last night. My chamber of commerce president, Rebecca Young, was there. They have just received refunding for the new regional jobs committee. That fantastic program will absolutely transform the work that they do. Given the work that they have achieved to date and what that refunding will do, we will

continue to have a bright economic future, flourish and diversify our economy. Skilling Queenslanders for Work is something else I have spoken about a million times in this place. That great work keeps happening in the Redlands for our people. It is a program that we must continue to invest in.

I am a Queensland hydrogen champion. The work that is happening in the hydrogen space is extraordinarily exciting, particularly in the Redlands where the rubber hits the road. So much great work is happening there.

In the community space, millions of dollars have been delivered from the Gambling Community Benefit Fund for many very important organisations and I will touch on a few of those in a minute. Our IndigiScapes facility has been upgraded. We have had sports upgrades. We have more police officers, new police equipment, vehicles, barges and high-speed jet boats. There are more fisheries patrol officers. There are new fire appliances. We have invested in new DV crisis accommodation, which is extraordinarily important, and we continue to invest in DV worker support for our Redlands community.

Much work has been completed and much work is underway. I know that there will always be more to do to continue to build on the legacy that I want to leave for my Redlands community. We really do have the most vibrant community heart. Our community is a collective of generous and kind-hearted people. I have been blessed with the opportunity to engage with many incredible community groups, service groups, sporting clubs and volunteer organisations. I want to mention some of those, but there are so many I know I will miss some.

We have amazing churches in our area. Champions Church runs our food bank and does an amazing job in the community. In the conservation space there is SMBI Coast Care, the garden clubs, Bay Islands Conservation, Coochiemudlo Island Coastcare and Karragarra Community Garden. In the service organisations we have Lions and Rotary. They all do an incredible job.

In the emergency services volunteer space, we have Volunteer Marine Rescue at Victoria Point and the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard at Redland Bay. I am extraordinarily proud of the work that we have done on the War on Wrecks, cleaning up our waterways and looking at how we can improve them into the future. I am extraordinarily proud to be the patron of the coast guard. We have a rural fire brigade station on each island and they do an incredible job. The Coochiemudlo Surf Life Saving Club is also fantastic. It is the breeding ground for all of our nippers. Our volunteers in police do an amazing job as does Volunteering Redlands. We have local ambulance committees as well the Venturers, Scouts and Girl Guides. There are many organisations that I could mention.

The Redlands RSL branches are wonderful. In the Redlands we have Night Ninjas, the Redlands Centre for Women and Running Wild which all do absolutely incredible work. Meals on Wheels has been extraordinarily well supported as are our seniors clubs, art groups, Rugby League clubs, AFL clubs and netball clubs. I am a passionate netball junky from a long time ago. I have really loved getting back on the court with a whistle in my hand. It has been a real treat to be able to do that during the 56th Parliament and continuing into the 57th Parliament. I am very good with a whistle, member for Bundamba. There are many great sporting clubs that are working hard. There is a lot to be excited about in the Redlands. As our chamber of commerce says, we have an extraordinarily bright future ahead and a really strong community.

I think everybody in this place knows that it is the incredible people behind each one of us in this House that see us here today. To everybody who has been a part of my journey to have the honour of representing my Redlands community in this place, thank you for your support and enthusiasm, for rallying when required and for cheering loudly when I needed it most. Without your ongoing support and friendship we could not have achieved this. Our campaign was honest and it was grassroots. It was a long-term campaign. Every day that we are in this place working for our communities we should work as hard as we did when campaigning. Whether we are in this place or out in the community, it is always about working for our people, working for our community and being a part of it.

There are so many people to thank. I had an army of volunteers who helped across the campaign, throughout pre-polling and on election day. I was helped by over 150 volunteers. It was a massive turnout. Firstly, thank you to every single Labor Party branch member in the Redlands, particularly my current branch president, Ken Kirby, and my former branch president, Ross Cornwill. Our branch friends who came out were also incredible. We had so much support come in so many ways. From phone calling to doorknocking, from roadside to trailer duties, they were incredible. To the residents who allowed me the privilege of putting up my signs at their homes, thank you. An extraordinary number of locals backed me and I thank them for that.

My deepest gratitude goes to some people who really helped me and assisted my campaign. My campaign manager and her husband, Stephanie and Mike Morris, were my rock of Gibraltar—they really were. I thank my field organiser, Jasper Every, and the whole Young Labor crew. I have no doubt that Jasper will be in this place one day. He is an extraordinarily passionate member of the Labor Party

and an extraordinarily passionate member of our Redlands community. To the whole Hewlett family, thank you. To Glenda Little and her family, thank you. To Glenn Barlow and his family, thank you. You were all absolutely incredible. You all had my back when I needed it most.

To my electorate neighbours, Don Brown and Mick de Brenni: it has been quite a ride. I thank you for all of your support. To Jules Campbell, Jeanette Temperley, Meredith Newman and former senator Claire Moore, thank you for your wisdom, advice and guidance. It continues to be invaluable.

Thank you to the amazing teams at the ETU and the United Workers Union. Again they were the wind beneath my wings. They have been incredible supporters in every way. I thank them so very much. I am very proud to be part of two unions that day in, day out work to get a fair go for all Queenslanders, creating a better and more equitable life for all. I also thank the AMWU, the CPSU and Emily's List for their support.

As everyone in this House knows, the support and love of our families is essential. To my partner, Shayne; my mum, Lynne; my son, Luke; my sister, Rachel; and my nieces, Jess and Jodi: thank you for letting me have the honour of representing our community. Thank you in advance as I continue to take you on this exciting and sometimes crazy journey with me. Mum, thank you for all that you do. You are amazing. For a 77-year-old to be out on roadside duty is pretty cool. Mum rallied all her friends to come out. She was really fantastic. She was great on pre-poll with her wheelie walker. She did a really good job.

A government member: She's a proud.

Ms RICHARDS: She is a proud mum. On election day she helped captain the booth on Russell Island. She caught the early morning ferry out there and the very late ferry back again that night. She is incredible.

My son, Luke, supported me from long distance. COVID kept him in Sydney. He was not able to be here at the time, but he certainly is pretty useful in the media space. He provided support and help from afar. He is my proudest achievement. His kindness, his lens of fairness and his caring for others inspire me. It is how I will continue to approach every day as the member for Redlands.

In 2020 I had two very different campaigns running simultaneously. The most important one was to see my partner, Shayne, beat cancer. The second was to win an election for the privilege of representing my community. Shayne was diagnosed with cancer in August last year and his chemotherapy and radiation treatment ran through to the end of the year. I have to say that on election day he looked like death warmed up. However, with the help of some friends he made it out to vote with me at Bay View State School on the morning of the election. He was nothing short of amazing, but I was not able to be there to support him through that. Everybody in this place knows how much time we spend away, engaging with our communities. I am really pleased to say that he has had the all clear, so in 2020 I had two victories in two campaigns that were very important to me.

Finally, to finish where I started, thank you again to the people of Redlands for your faith and trust in me. I promise I will not let you down. Together we will continue to forge a strong community. We will work together, we will build more respect in our community and we will leave an amazing legacy for our children and for future generations.