




Speech By
Hon. Leanne Linard

MEMBER FOR NUDGEES

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ADJOURNMENT

Martin, Mr W

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (6.25 pm): It is a pleasure to stand and draw attention to the achievements of an outstanding member of my local community, Will Martin. Will and his family have lived in the Nudgee electorate since 2013 and Will graduated from Nudgee College in 2017. Will is an incredibly warm, likeable and funny young man, but he is also extraordinarily resilient and determined.

When Will was six years old he suffered a stroke which left him with a tremor in his right arm and blindness in his right eye. I cannot even begin to imagine the fear and distress his lovely family would have felt at that time in their lives. Will went through four months of rehabilitation where he had to learn to walk and talk again and learn to use his left hand for writing—no mean feat when he is right-handed. Because of the stroke, Will was not able to participate in contact sports and became interested in swimming, particularly after he graduated high school. Will started training and made the move to his old school haunt after high school, Nudgee College Swimming, to train under coach David Proud. Will did not think he was particularly fast. He took a break from swimming after high school and thought that this may even be his last year in the pool, but David saw his potential and suggested that Will participate in events that he had never swum before.

In typical Will style, he said he would give it a go—and by 'go' he gave it his all. Will pulled on the green and gold and represented Australia on the international stage in 2019 at the World Para Swimming Championships in London. Will clocked an impressive 58.28 for the 100-metre fly at the Australian Multi-Class Swimming Championships on the Gold Coast in April this year and qualified for the Paralympics team, heading to Tokyo.

In July I dropped by the Nudgee College pool to catch up with Will and his coach David and wish him well for his upcoming Olympic campaign. Will is hard not to love. Our quick catch-up turned into a meeting of an hour and a half with lots of laughs and Will gaining one more fan for life—his local MP. I promised Will I would follow his progress at the games and I knew our local community would do likewise.

In August of this year, Will put all of those 4.30 am starts six days a week to the test on the world stage. Against stiff competition, he competed in the 50-metre free, 400-metre free, 100-metre butterfly—his favourite event—and relay events. With his family excitedly watching from Brisbane due to COVID restrictions and his community and country behind him, Will blitzed the field—three gold and one silver medal. Will holds two world records and one Paralympic record—an absolutely outstanding effort and so exciting to watch.

It was an absolute pleasure to have Will and his lovely mum and dad, Loretta and Greg, at the parliament today for lunch to celebrate his wins but also to celebrate his tenacity, resilience, humility and the example he sets for every Queenslanders who faces adversity.