




Speech By
Linus Power

MEMBER FOR LOGAN

Record of Proceedings, 25 February 2021

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (4.11 pm): As we gather here after our election—and hopefully we will do so again in four years time—I recognise that we continue a human tradition of people gathering to consider how they will manage and govern their affairs that has existed for thousands of years. In particular I recognise the Jagera people who are a part of my electorate and also the Yugambeh-speaking peoples. I recognise that we continue that speech and that it is humbling to have the entire course of human history that has existed in our country.

I am humbled to speak in reply to our Governor's speech at this extraordinary time in our extraordinary state's history. Within this great state I represent what I think is—and I will back this up with hard facts during my speech—the greatest area with the greatest people in our great state. In the last term, during my address-in-reply speech I spoke with pride of the Logan community's resilience in coming together to support those impacted by the 2017 floods following Cyclone Debbie. The Premier came to North Maclean to see for herself that collective response. I thought that I could never be more proud of Logan than I was when I saw how the Logan mud army supported their neighbours. However, our community now faces an even more extreme threat: the COVID-19 pandemic. I am simply blown away by the community response in Logan. If I may, I will illustrate that with a brief story.

Last year I got a call that no-one here would want: the chief of staff of the then health minister and now Deputy Premier rang to say that there was an infection within our community, that one of the people who was infected had worked in our school community and that they had significant fears of a major breakout. That turned our little area of Logan upside down, but the response from the community was simply awesome. In particular I recognise the Parklands Christian College in Park Ridge and their community response.

Principal Garry Cully immediately went out to inform people of what was going on. When he had to get tested and go into lockdown, Pastor Mike Warman from the community stepped up. He was there with the long line of people from the entire school community who were waiting in the heat to get tested. He sorted out problems with a positive and smiling face and he did that for days on end, adding to the fantastic community health response from the Queensland government. My son and I had been at soccer training with kids from Parklands Christian College, so like the rest of the community we did the right thing and got tested. After a few days I was cleared and was able to rejoin the community to see the response in action. It was absolutely fantastic that the community was so selfless that it went above and beyond to keep Queensland safe and we saw the results. Obviously even before that people were doing the right thing because we did not see infections from within that group.

The alternative to keeping Queensland safe and secure, as the Queensland government did and as our community did, is really stark. We know that the risky LNP called 64 times for our borders to open. They moved motions in this House to have our borders opened even as New South Wales had mystery community transmissions and, of course, as cases in Victoria were exploding. They had radical and risky plans that endangered the Queensland community, that endangered the Queensland economy and that endangered the lives of Queenslanders, especially the lives of Queensland seniors

whom I feel the LNP take so much for granted. We heard that they had a secret plan to remain open to New South Wales regardless of how much New South Wales was falling. Premier Berejiklian told us that the then opposition leader, the member for Nanango, had secretly told her what she would not tell the people of Queensland, that whatever the risk Queensland would be opened and the advice of the health professionals would be thrown away.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Madam Deputy Speaker, I take offence at this absolute rot.

Mr POWER: I withdraw, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mr Mander: You wait till you're asked!

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I take personal offence. I ask the speaker to withdraw and further—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Member for Nanango, I ask you to take your seat.

Mr POWER: I withdraw, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Madam Deputy Speaker, further, I take personal offence at the misleading rot from this member and I will be writing to the Speaker with those concerns.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Nanango.

Ms McMILLAN: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I have two concerns. One is the unparliamentary language used by the member for Nanango and the second is the—

Ms Bates: That is not a point of order. It is a frivolous point of order.

Ms McMILLAN: I beg your pardon?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members, I ask you to please stop quarrelling across the chamber.

Ms McMILLAN: My second point of order relates to the member for Everton and the language or the disposition he used, which was threatening towards another member of the parliament and which is unparliamentary.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Mansfield.

Mr MANDER: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Everton, I ask you to sit down while I deal with one point of order at a time. Members, I remind you not to use unparliamentary language, please.

Mr POWER: I am pleased to hear that what Premier Berejiklian told people at a press conference was not correct. I am pleased to see that there is concern and that we would have kept borders closed, because it is a vital tool in order to keep Queensland people safe.

For the people of Logan, connectivity is vitally important. The Mount Lindesay Highway is a vital connection for our electorate and we have already seen significant investment in it, such as the North Maclean safety project and the South Maclean intersection project, which of course received 100 per cent state funding. We have built a new bridge across Jimboomba Creek, connecting Camp Cable Road, where a new intersection had been built previously, to Johanna Street, again at 100 per cent. I know that the main roads minister has been down there to see those projects and is passionate about making sure that the Mount Lindesay Highway is safer and faster. He has a really deep understanding of the project. Of course, we have also built four lanes between Rosia Road and Stoney Camp Road and now we are building four lanes between Stoney Camp Road and Chambers Flat Road.

The minister spoke about it this morning. He also reminded the House that that was one of the projects to be cancelled due to the funding cuts that were announced barely two days before the people went to vote—in fact, probably after the majority of people in Logan had already voted. We knew that that would be cut because that funding was no longer there.

We have also seen fantastic investment in the four-laning of Johanna Street throughout to South Street. Here I want to reach out and say that the federal government has come to the party in funding part of this project. Secretly, I think the minister deserves that credit because he has fought so hard behind the scenes. Publicly, I acknowledge that the federal government has done a great job, but I recognise that the minister has put it on the agenda again and again in order to ensure there is that funding.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr POWER: It is a secret I have let you in on, member for Nanango. I want to recognise the public transport services that have come on in Logan, including the new TransLink electric bus service in Yarrabilba that makes it cheaper for residents to get through to the city or to the Hyperdome and the train connection. There is also a new Flagstone and Greenbank service, a fantastic way to get to the much improved park-and-ride at the Greenbank RSL, where people can get express services all the way to the city.

We should not forget the demand responsive transport, which I note the member for Springwood had great involvement in campaigning for—an innovative new service providing public transport to areas that have low population density. People in areas such as Chambers Flat can call a number or get on the app and access public transport services. When the LNP were in power they cut services. In the old electorate of Logan that I represented, there were 2,000 fewer bus stops each week, meaning significantly reduced services to the people who wanted to use public transport across our city.

We recognise that police and emergency services are really important. That is why we have built a new ambulance station in Yarrabilba serving this fast-growing community, and also one in Munruben, right on the Chambers Flat Road intersection, where there is great access not only to the Mount Lindesay Highway but also to the growing communities in Greenbank and Park Ridge. They complement the Logan West ambulance and the Jimboomba ambulance.

The new Logan Village Yarrabilba police station tripled the size of the Logan Village Police Beat. We have great, passionate police officers, including the new senior sergeant, working there. We recognise that our police really deeply care about their community, working from the police stations at Browns Plains and Jimboomba. They are hardworking, professional, caring police officers who are dedicated to keeping us safe, preventing crime and changing young lives to put people on the right path.

Moving on to schools and TAFE, I spoke earlier about the Premier, the education minister and the member for Jordan coming to Greenbank to visit the new Everleigh Estate opposite Pub Lane to attend the sod-turning to start the construction of a new school that will serve the families and future families in the quickly growing areas of Greenbank and North Maclean. This builds on the Palaszczuk government's commitment to education where we have built the Yarrabilba State School; the Yarrabilba State Community College, as well as new buildings and a performing arts centre there; and the Park Ridge State High School, where they are preparing for jobs of the future and have a world-class critical-thinking space at the fantastic new arts centre building. As I said before, during the LNP's term in government—the member for Pine Rivers knows the answer to this one—how many classrooms did they build during that time?

Ms Boyd: Zero.

Mr POWER: Zero. The member knew the answer.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr POWER: No, I am talking about the growing areas of Logan, member for Nanango. There were zero built there. It was a great disappointment.

We built the new ward at Logan Hospital, adding new beds—the LNP built none—and we built that addition in record time, powering ahead with the construction of that fantastic and adaptable centre. Construction is also underway on the expanded project which, for a growing area, is very important. We had COVID-19 testing centres at the Parklands Christian College during the emergency and a permanent testing centre at the Browns Plains Community Health Centre, which is a fantastic asset to the local area.

When we run for election, we never do it alone. I want to recognise and thank all of the members of the Labor Party in our local area who deeply believe in social justice and have a passion for delivering services to a growing area for which I fight. I recognise our trade unions, who fight for social justice in the workplace. I do not want to single out any of the unions because I think they are all fantastic, but I do appreciate the advice of Steve Baker at the Australian Workers' Union and Peter Biagini at the TWU. All of the unions each and every day reach out to stand up for workers to create a better society in Australia.

I want to thank my family—my wife, Jacki, and the kids. We are involved in a great project together where we have three fantastic kids and we—

An honourable member: A joint merger?

Mr POWER: That is maybe not the right word. Together we are a great family! We often discuss how our world is going and what challenges we face. We get great feedback from the kids, who are just as interested in where we are going as we are as their parents.

I want to thank my mum, Mary, who is part of the reason I have such a passion for social justice and for advancing our country. I know that whenever she was not helping me she was trying to ensure the member for Mermaid Beach was not elected. She won on one and lost on the other, but I think there is always next time. I also recognise John Mickel, a former Speaker in this place and the former member for Logan. He is always there as a sounding-board to help us understand what our task is in serving the people of Logan and pushing people to discover the services needed and how we deliver them.

I have a list of people I wish to thank. It is a very long list so I will pick out just a few. Firstly, I thank Jim Chalmers, the local federal member. I thank Dani, who on pre-poll kept me together in my nervous moments. I thank Ben and Brendan, who learned so much but also taught me so much. I want to thank so many people, but I will particularly mention Terry and Joan, Terry and Trish and also, of course, Bev, who is a special friend of mine and the member for Jordan. Firstly, Bev has fantastic advice for us all and has great insight and, secondly, this was the last election at which she would help the member for Jordan and me as she is moving with her grandkids down to a terrible place called New South Wales. We really will miss her because she is very special, particularly in giving us advice.

I also thank Teresa Lane, who worked for me and gave me special insight into how you serve people—how, when people come to you in a difficult fashion, you try to find respect and understanding of where they come from. She has taught me a lot and continues to make a great contribution to the community that she holds very dear.

We heard early on in the COVID pandemic—we hear it less now—that there were two courses of action we needed to follow. They were the economic course and the health course. During the committee hearings on the COVID-19 we heard it best from our Premier, who said—

Let me make this very clear: you cannot have a strong economy unless you have the right health response. We are dealing with twin crises. It is very, very complex. It is about getting that balance right. We will do everything we can to address cases as they come up, but at the moment it is absolutely critical that we continue to listen to the Chief Health Officer's advice.

Our Premier has been a guiding light for Queenslanders—steady and secure. She has been taking the advice of professionals and guiding us. That is why we have such a strong economic response and why we have such a strong health response. For that reason, I recognise her leadership of this state. On behalf of the people of Logan, I thank her for all she has done in the past three years. I will continue to working with her. I endorse the Governor's speech.