



Speech By
Peter Russo
MEMBER FOR TOOHEY

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MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Pegg, Mr D

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (4.10 pm): I rise to pay tribute to Duncan Pegg MP, who was taken too early from us and who will remain in our memory as a man who lived life to the full, who never backed down from a challenge and who loved his community with sincerity and pride. The last time I was with Duncan was on 2 May at the Islamic College for the Community Iftar Dinner. His good friend Usman Khawaja, the Australian cricketer, was also at the dinner. This was one of many nights when Duncan was in his much loved community, delivering a speech with his wit and humour on full display. He thanked the community for their support, reminding them with a cheeky grin that his three tilts at the election had seen his support increase each time. Duncan embraced his multicultural community, and they returned their respect for his hard work at the ballot box and in their genuine affection for him, which was certainly on display at his funeral where hundreds came to celebrate his life and say goodbye.

Duncan and I had neighbouring electorates, with our offices on the same stretch of road. We campaigned together on each of his three wins. Each Saturday of the campaigns, I would be on the corner of Mains Road in front of Runcorn State School and Duncan's parents, Lindsey and Graham, and his brothers would be on the opposite side of the road at the Pinelands shopping centre doing street stalls and meeting people as they walked past.

He had a campaign energy rivalled only by a few. He also did not mind enlisting his trademark cheekiness, even with those on this side of the chamber, pushing and pulling to get a good-natured rise out of you. His sense of humour was with him until the end. Outside my office, there is an electronic billboard. For a couple of weeks before he had stopped his official duties, he ran an advertisement on that sign, literally right outside my office, with his photo, his big smile, and simply saying 'Farewell'. It is extraordinary how he met the challenge of campaigning last year in the same way he did every time he campaigned, even while he knew this campaign would be his last.

In 2016 Duncan, Mark Furner and I travelled to Taiwan with the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office, and I still have many photos on my phone of that trip. Can I assure everyone there are none that would cause embarrassment. Every now and then a memory on my iPhone posts of our trip in Taiwan.

Duncan and I were always invited to the same events for the Chinese New Year, the Moon Festival and the Dragon Boat Festival, to name a few. At these events Duncan and I would often be sitting at the same table, and as the night wore on we would find ourselves sitting alone talking about the many goings-on that confronted each of us—those being, quite a few times, the campaigning, the politicking and the personalities we each had to deal with in our political lives. Also, it was about who caused us the most grief.

It would be of no surprise to anyone here to know that Duncan and I did not always agree, and we were not afraid to tell each other that as well. It was a relationship capable of sustaining enthusiastic debate, although I have to note that Duncan had often said to others that, because I was the same age as his dad, he did not need to listen to me.

Duncan and I were organising to go to China with a business delegation from our respective electorates in 2019, so we were speaking often to each other around the planning for this trip, the cities we may visit, our imminent departure and following the proper protocols. It is forever etched in my memory the phone call I received from Duncan to tell me that he would be unable to travel for our trip. He told me that his doctor had told him that it would not be in his best interests to travel to China and that he was to commence his treatment as soon as possible.

Farewell, Duncan. I know you are in a better place. My deepest condolences to his mum, Lindsey; his dad, Graham; and his brothers, Cameron, Grant, Graham Jr and Lachlan.