



Speech By  
**Robbie Katter**


**MEMBER FOR TRAEGER**

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Record of Proceedings, 14 October 2021

### **MOTION OF CONDOLENCE**

**Bertoni, Mr APD**

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (9.44 am): I rise to make a contribution to the condolence motion. Mr Angelo Bertoni, I understand, was a contemporary of my father and grandfather in the seat of Mount Isa. Angelo arrived in Mount Isa and opened his first pharmacy in 1961 and a second pharmacy in the medical centre in Camooweal Street. His slogan at the time, I am told, was 'the chemist who really cares'. Being an innovative marketer of cosmetics, dispensary items and photography allowed him to expand to three pharmacies in Mount Isa. He was always conscious of people's health and it was known at the time that, in view of the harsh sunlight out there, he was big on people using sunscreen and hats around the place. In the days of colognes and perfumes, Angelo was purported to always be giving away samples to entice people and was a great salesman in this respect, I am told. Angelo stood for city mayor and later ran a successful campaign for the state seat of Mount Isa on a platform of no corruption. It was a smart marketing ploy, they said, for the day. He was known as a smart man. I was speaking to a local earlier today who said that Angelo had a polite and kind manner and was not loud or always grandstanding. I did not take any offence at that!

In 1973 he defended Mount Isa and its annual rodeo against media attacks and a lot of pressure. He was a strong advocate for the establishment of the show as early as 1973 and took it through another nine years. We saw the rise and fall of several like-minded shows—they appeared and quickly disappeared—but that was taken right through to 1982. He was a big pillar of that. He worked with my grandfather in getting funding for the Lake Julius water storage—a beautiful, great big water storage dam on the Leichhardt River that we enjoy the benefit of today.

He held the position of mayor for one term, until he stood at the state election as the Country Party candidate and served two terms. He was a strong advocate for the migrant influx of workers during his time as mayor and at one point had up to 53 nationalities. Being of Italian decent himself, he was living proof that everyone, regardless of ethnicity, had the opportunity to hold office.

I was also told anecdotally about his generosity as an operator in the city at the time. One story is that he offered Mother's Day gifts to every mother in town. I wanted to make sure I had that right: 'Are we talking about every mother?' He said, 'He sent Mother's Day gifts to every mother in town.' That demonstrates the generosity of the man. His is a well-respected name in Mount Isa. I can strongly attest to that. His name is associated with integrity. He did wonderful things for the community he lived in for the time he was there. Vale, Angelo Bertoni.