



Speech By  
**Hon. Scott Stewart**


**MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE**

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Record of Proceedings, 16 September 2021

**MOTION OF CONDOLENCE**

**McElligott, Mr KV**

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (9.55 am): As the member for Townsville, it is a great privilege to be called upon to support this condolence motion honouring the extraordinary and absolutely wonderful servant of North Queensland and, indeed, the entire state, Ken McElligott. I extend my deepest condolences to Ken's family, his wife and long-time partner, Shirley; their children, Scott, Mark and Toni, and their partners; as well as Ken and Shirley's grandchildren and great grandchildren. I also extend my condolences to my friend and colleague, the member for Thuringowa, who has lost a mentor and a very close friend and, of course, to all those whose lives were made all the better for having met Ken McElligott.

In North Queensland you either knew Ken McElligott or you knew of Ken McElligott. He was that kind of guy. Ken was a fighter. Nothing shows that more than the quote he often used: it is the strongest swimmers who swim against the current. I have used that quote many times now. When we have tough times I want to be that strong swimmer who swims against the current.

Ken was a champion of regional health. As health minister, he helped to build Queensland's and Townsville's status as a world-class health hub. As we have heard, he was also the former member for Townsville and the former minister for lands. Considering that I have both of those under my purview, I have big shoes to fill. If I can be half as good as Ken, I reckon I will be doing a pretty good job. As former Townsville mayor Mike Reynolds said earlier this year, Townsville and, indeed, Queensland would not have the health services they do today if it was not for Ken McElligott.

Continuing the theme of Ken's lifelong mission to keep Queenslanders healthy, he was a key advocate for upgrades to the Townsville Sports Reserve and for establishing the North Queensland Games. He absolutely loved his sport and he was a key figure in Townsville's hockey scene as well as in establishing Townsville's state basketball league team. Ken was a major driver for the growth of the Port of Townsville. Part of that enormous legacy is just how important the port is in my home city. Most of all, as a life member of the Australian Labor Party, Ken was about working Queenslanders.

Today we remember the life of Ken McElligott. We remember what he achieved, both in the halls of this place and right across Queensland, in the hope that we continue to follow his outstanding legacy. This morning when we had breakfast we talked about what Ken's legacy was. We all talked about and pointed to different aspects of what Ken delivered for his community. I reckon if we asked Ken what his legacy was, he would proudly say that his legacy was his family. He lived for his family. Today Scott said that, no matter how hard this job is and the time demands that we all put into this place, Ken still found time to play cricket in the backyard or spend time with family. You know what? It was the family who helped Ken to do his absolute best not only for Townsville but also for the state. We thank you for the sacrifice that you made in supporting an absolutely wonderful man.

I am sure that the members for Thuringowa and Mundingburra will agree that it is an absolute and great honour for us to represent the constituents Ken fought for. We pay tribute to him today. He was an amazing man. Vale, Ken McElligott.