




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

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ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (6.14 pm): I start by respectfully acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, the Turrbal and Jagera peoples, and pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging, and the traditional owners in Waterford, the Jagera and Yugambeh language nation, and again acknowledge elders past, present and emerging.

I say a big thankyou to Waterford for re-electing me as their representative in the Queensland parliament. My commitment to our community is as unwavering and as strong as the first day I was elected all those years ago. In that time there have been some incredible local wins. I remember when principal Mick Hornby came to see me about a GP clinic at Mabel Park High School to provide vital health care to disadvantaged students. We took that idea to the Minister for Education, Minister Grace Grace, and I am pleased to say that not only has Mabel Park High School become the first school in Queensland to have a GP clinic but also, because of its success, we are now expanding the program right across the state.

Roy and Henrietta Moran from Regal Waters retirement village in Bethania shared with me their thoughts and ideas on how we could make our community safer—from tackling dangerous intersections and fighting for emergency vehicle access across the Bethania train station to lobbying for important changes to the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act.

Politics for me has always been about changing people's lives for the better, to fight for people like Colin Batterham. Colin and his neighbour Rebecca came to my office because he was facing eviction from his retirement home at the age of 81. Not only did his landlord force tenants to sign tenancy agreements riddled with errors but also they charged tenants three-quarters of their pension for accommodation and meals, leaving them with very little to live off, and the meals served were absolutely atrocious. Colin refused to pay for his meals because he said they were not edible and in return received an eviction notice.

We fought the landlord every step of the way and unearthed a systemic scheme that took advantage of vulnerable people not just in my electorate of Waterford but right across the state. We have now prosecuted this landlord for those activities across three villages and she is facing hefty penalties for her actions. Thanks in part to our intervention, Colin and his fellow residents were not evicted and they now get their meals delivered by Meals on Wheels. People like Colin are the reason I got involved in politics and why I am so proud to be the member for Waterford.

Ours is an inspiring and growing community. It is a considerate, compassionate, diverse and generous community. It was Waterford's shared values and commitment to one another that undeniably got us through what has been a very tough couple of years. There is no denying that 2020 was a year that tested us all, and so has 2021. Queensland needed strong leadership to guide us through COVID-19 and we found that in spades with our Premier, Annastacia Palaszczuk. Our Premier remained steadfast, listened to the health advice of our Chief Health Officer, Dr Jeannette Young—now

Governor of Queensland—and together they kept us safe and healthy. I want to thank our Premier; our Governor, the former Chief Health Officer; our outgoing health minister, the member for Murrumba; and our new health minister, the member for Redcliffe, for their relentless and continuing commitment to Queenslanders through the pandemic.

Queenslanders in turn showed their gratitude by re-electing a strong and stable Palaszczuk Labor government. Overwhelmingly, Queenslanders said yes to our plan for economic recovery—a plan that has kept locals working, our businesses in action and our students in schools. We kept Queensland working and moving at a time when world economies were being shut down. As then minister for employment and small business and the minister for training and skills, I felt it was important that we got things right during COVID-19. We provided more support than any other state to keep small businesses' doors open and keep Queenslanders in jobs. We also delivered free TAFE for year 12 graduates and free apprenticeships for under-25s and supported over 25,000 young Queenslanders get a valuable qualification for free. We also committed to skilling up young people by expanding programs to anyone aged under 25. Our Back to Work program supported more than 23,000 Queenslanders, and through Skilling Queenslanders for Work more than 32,000 Queenslanders found a job. I would like to thank the wonderful ministerial and departmental staff on behalf of Queenslanders who are working, who now have a new skill, who have a better job and a brighter future because of the work that those in the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training delivered.

This term I have had the privilege to serve as the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. It is an absolute honour to be the first law officer of Queensland. Social justice is so important to me. Good laws are paramount, which is why I will always advocate for a safe, fair and just society. As Attorney-General, I will ensure Queenslanders have access to justice because right now Queenslanders need the law and its protection and representation more than ever.

We know that Queenslanders stayed home for much of the pandemic to protect themselves and the community from COVID-19, yet for so many women home is not a safe place. Almost one in 10 women in a relationship in Australia experienced domestic and family violence during the pandemic, with two-thirds of those women saying that the violence started or became worse as a result of COVID. Added to the complexity and the risk that COVID-19 has introduced as well as the services supporting them is the economic impact felt by Queensland women. They have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. As we rebuild Queensland's economy, it is crucial that we put women at the forefront. That is why we have invested \$155 million in Queensland women and support services for victims of domestic and family violence this financial year.

It would be remiss of me to talk about the advocacy of women without acknowledging the former member for South Brisbane, Jackie Trad. Jackie is a fearless warrior and she made sure that the needs of women were always met. The tireless work that she did on abortion law reform, telling the thousands of Queensland women, 'You are not a criminal for choosing to have rights over your own body,' her courage and her determination paved the way for many Labor women, including myself, to pursue politics. Thank you, Jackie.

As I said at the beginning, my commitment to the people of Waterford is resolute. When I was first elected back in 2015 I promised to deliver for Waterford and I continued with my commitment by delivering \$16 million for a new auditorium at Marsden State High School; a thousand jobs for the Logan Hospital expansion; \$460 million for new hospital beds, new maternity ward and new parking for Logan Hospital; finish stage 1 of the M1-Gateway Motorway upgrade including the new Underwood Road bridge; started on stage 2 of the M1-Gateway Motorway upgrade including the widening of the M1 from Eight Mile Plains to Daisy Hill and a new busway to Springwood; upgrades to Loganlea TAFE's nursing and VET units; and I want to build on all of the collaborations of the last six years to create more change for our community for the better and secure Waterford for the future.

In order to build on these important foundations, we need Labor governments and we need to win elections. If there is one thing I know for certain, no election can be won alone. I am so lucky to have a dedicated and hardworking team on my campaign, a fantastic team of volunteers, lifelong Labor members, the phenomenal Waterford branch members and even some first-time campaigners who joined the Labor family because they believed in our shared values of equality, fairness and social justice. I want to thank them all for their tireless and extraordinary work on the 2020 Waterford campaign. What a stellar effort and what a spectacular feat we all achieved in re-electing a majority Labor government on 31 October.

As I said, elections are never fought alone and I want to recognise the campaign team led by Olivia Amsden, as well as Alex Alder and Liz Irvine, who helped manage our amazing volunteers. A special thankyou goes to Brad Maltby, Kate Grisedale, Christos and Colleen Papadopoulos, Lonnie Nielsen, Sally Traynor, Yvonne Breitzkreutz, Rachel Simpkin-Bale and Tony Bale, Gail MacPherson,

Adrienne Cremin, Charlie and Jenny Bennett, Neil Rogers, Mark Avasalu, Frank Mangan, Qin Zhang, Henrietta and Dana Moran, Laura and Eric Guthrie, Councillor Tim Frazer, Sharon Robertson and Rowan Holzberger who volunteered through rain, hail or shine—they gave it their all. Each and every single volunteer talked to voters on the doors, on the phones and at polling booths with one simple message: Labor puts people first.

No campaign team can work without the fuel needed to keep going, so a special thankyou goes to the Beenleigh CWA for providing a delicious and nutritious lunch on election day. I want to thank both my current and former staff: Laura Fraser Hardy, Michael Kely, Justin Foster, Joshua Lucey, Inga Williams, Penni Pappas, Phoenix Campbell, Jacqueline Anderson, Chanelle Ashfield-Smith, Dou Ribu, Tori Holliday, Claire Francis and Monica Irvine. Right now Monica is enjoying time off with her beautiful baby, Oscar, but we are happy to have her back next year.

A special thankyou goes to my incredible driver, Alice Gilliver. Thank you to my wonderful union family Rohan Webb and Ann Marie Allen from the AMWU; all of my friends at the UWU, ETU Together, the plumbers union, the UFU, the Services Union and the CFMEU; to Julie-Ann Campbell and Kate Luke and everyone at Queensland Labor; those who worked tirelessly in organisations that fight for great change such as Maurice Blackburn, Slater and Gordon, Access including the amazing CEO, Gail Kerr, Kingston East Neighbourhood Group, the Centre Against Sexual Violence and Logan House Fire Support Network.

I also thank my mum, Chris, who was again a champion at pre-poll; my dad, Eric; my sister, Erin, and her husband, Charles; my incredible adopted parents and friends, Fran and Pepe, who helped so much; and my amazing neighbours, John May, Larissa and Carl as well as their children Kiana and Will. I thank my incredible partner, Matt Collins, for all his support and thank you, of course, to the girls Sibella and Maggie.

Waterford, as your re-elected MP, I stand here today to reaffirm my commitment to you all. I will fight for you. I will not let you down. We will continue together the wonderful work we have done to make our community of Waterford even better.