



Speech By  
**Hon. Yvette D'Ath**


**MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE**

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Record of Proceedings, 25 February 2021

**MOTION OF CONDOLENCE**

**Sullivan, Mr JH**

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.46 am): I rise to pay my respects to the late Jon Sullivan. As we heard, Jon served the Queensland parliament as the member for Glass House and, later, the member for Caboolture after a redistribution. He was elected on 2 December 1989 and was part of a historic win for Queensland with the election of the Goss Labor government. Fast-forward a few decades and Jon was part of another historic election win, being elected to the House of Representatives in 2007 as part of the Rudd government. It was during Jon's time in federal parliament that I got to know him while he served as the federal member for Longman and I served as the member for Petrie. What became apparent very quickly with Jon was that he was genuine, kind and caring. Jon was a 'what you see is what you get' man and could not have been more down to earth. I remember us having a chat about corflute pictures and advice from party office. He advised me that he had been encouraged, maybe quite strongly, to shave the beard off. His response? 'No. Take it or leave it.' That is the man he was. What you see is what you get. He was truly there to serve his community and to make a difference for his community, state and country.

Jon would go into bat for anyone, raise issues of importance to effect positive change and give a voice to the voiceless. He was a forward thinker and always advocated for services for his region, which he recognised as being one of the fastest growing areas of Queensland. Jon ensured that he advocated for services that were needed. These included advocating for a dedicated university campus for the Moreton Bay region to ensure that locals could access world-class tertiary education. I too share this view and I am sure he was absolutely thrilled to see USQ setting up in the area.

Another passion of Jon's was health care in terms of ensuring health services were available to keep pace with the growing population of his electorate. He advocated each and every day for additional health facilities. Some of those facilities we use today are very much due in part to Jon's advocacy. I know that he lobbied the Goss government very hard—and I know the then premier got a lot of pressure—and that he did deliver for the people of Caboolture with the Caboolture Hospital.

Ahead of the 2010 federal election, a redistribution occurred which saw the southern parts of Jon's electorate move into my then electorate of Petrie. It is always hard when you are a new member in that you work tirelessly in that first term and suddenly you find a third of your electorate taken off you and a third of a new electorate coming in and you have six months to try to get to know them and encourage them to want to vote for you. Jon was incredible. Even though he had thousands of new electors that he had to get to know in the northern part of his electorate, he spent so much time introducing me to the parts he was losing and taking me around and introducing me to businesses and making sure that they knew who I was and him praising me and saying, 'You'll have a great member in Yvette if you back her in.' I truly thank him for his support during that time. It was his personal touch that made Jon such a community champion.

I am aware that despite Jon's loss in 2010 he continued to be a community minded individual. After floods ripped through the Caboolture area one year, he heard of a family in need. Jon could not sit back and do nothing and let others take charge. That was not his style. I am reliably informed that he sourced a washing machine from a local branch member and personally picked it up in his van and delivered it to the family in need who had lost everything from those floods. Many would know Frank Sinatra's famous song *My Way*, and 'I did it my way' was indeed true about Jon. He got the job done, but he did it his way. I have heard many stories of how Jon and indeed the Sullivan family have helped individuals without any fanfare. With his permission, I want to read an extract from a reflection of a friend of the Sullivan family, Justin Foster, who I know is here today. He said—

On a personal level, it was the Sullivans who helped my family some 20 years ago and are the sole reason I joined the Labor party.

Noticing my severely disabled single mother trying to raise two kids, they helped us out as much as they could to get the services and assistance we needed.

Because of the Sullivans' influence, from primary school onwards I have been involved in every election to support the cause that Jon so vehemently believed in—that no person should be left behind or go without based on the contents of their wallet.

Thank you, Justin, for those kind words. This is just one example of how many see Jon and how Jon made such a positive impact in people's lives. My thoughts are with Carryn, her daughter Casey, who could not be here today, Tai and the entire Sullivan family. We thank you so much for the time that you gave Jon to us. Vale, Jon Sullivan.