



Speech By  
**Jennifer Howard**


**MEMBER FOR IPSWICH**

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## ADJOURNMENT

### Queensland Floods, Ipswich Electorate

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (7.01 pm): Ipswich has weathered many floods throughout its history, but the recent flood event in late February was perhaps one of the most challenging we have seen. From Friday, 25 February through to Monday, 28 February, 573 millimetres fell over Ipswich. This extreme downpour meant that some people saw the worst flooding they have seen since 2011.

The evacuation centre at the Ipswich showgrounds opened its doors on 25 February, providing food and shelter to more than 400 flood affected people. I want to thank the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the police minister who came out to Ipswich to meet the people in the evacuation centre. It meant so much to those people and we are really grateful for their visit. I am also grateful to the Premier for allowing us to speak further about the floods on a motion tomorrow.

Ipswich people are no strangers to flooding. Many locals I talked to readily recalled the 1974 floods and of course the 2011 and, to a lesser extent, the 2013 floods. As I moved around the flood-affected areas over the past few weeks, I was struck by the deep sadness and sense of loss that people are experiencing. They, more than anyone in our community, know what is ahead of them. They know that in most cases they can repair their damaged homes but they will never replace their beloved possessions. One heartbroken woman I spoke to lost her deceased husband's ashes in the floodwaters. It was important to me to speak to everyone I could get to to assure them that they are not alone—that I, the Palaszczuk government and the entire Ipswich community will be with them all the way.

We know that climate change is responsible for these extreme weather events. Ever since the bushfires in late 2019 and early 2020, it does not matter where I went or wherever I held a mobile office, the No. 1 issue Ipswich people raised with me was their concerns about the rise in temperature, wildlife loss and habitat loss. That is why I recently held a climate forum at the USQ Ipswich campus. Over 120 people attended. It was just last weekend, so people were still reeling from the floods. We heard from some fabulous speakers including our very own minister, Meaghan Scanlon, and assistant minister, Lance McCallum. We had USQ professors Scott Power and John Bell, who left us all in no doubt that the issue of climate change is our most pressing.

We know that people all over the world have been bearing the brunt of the worst effects of climate change for many years. It is absolutely heartbreaking to see so many families so close to home devastated by the floods. I want to thank the Ipswich City Council and all of our emergency services—the police, ambulance and firefighters. I thank the ADF, the SES and all the wonderful, selfless volunteers. Many of our schools were flood-affected and I thank the principals and staff and the school community for stepping up to make them ready as quickly as possible. Our recovery is our main priority now. I am looking forward to speaking further tomorrow.

*(Time expired)*