




Speech By
Jennifer Howard

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

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ADJOURNMENT

Ipswich Electorate, Floods

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (7.13 pm): I, along with Ipswich City Council Division 3 Councillor Marnie Doyle, was pleased to host State Recovery Coordinator Major General Jake Ellwood on his visit to Ipswich on 7 June. The February-March flood and rainfall event severely impacted parts of Ipswich, with over 500 homes sustaining considerable structural damage. As State Recovery Coordinator, Major General Ellwood is tasked with leading Queensland's flood recovery, working closely with the Queensland Reconstruction Authority and touring parts of the state that were devastated by the recent floods.

The major general was generous with his time, visiting some of the worst hit areas of the Ipswich electorate, including North Booval and Bundamba. North Booval was hit particularly hard. Some residents in this suburb have faced their third flood event in 11 years. They and other flood victims across Ipswich have been under enormous pressure in the last couple of months cleaning up, doing repair works to make their homes habitable again and going through the process of applying for grant funding or, if they can afford it, insurance. Many of these people did not have insurance. In North Booval the major general was able to see for himself the type of housing that has been allowed to be built in this flood-prone area and what sort of support will be needed for residents to mitigate future flood events. The major general also dropped by local Ipswich Knights Soccer Club, which also sustained flood damage.

The flood victims I spoke to have had to endure much personal and financial hardship over the last few months and I am proud to be a part of a government that does not abandon these people. When the floods hit, we had the Community Recovery Hotline up and running immediately and we set up our community recovery hubs across the state, including one in Ipswich. The Palaszczuk government also provided immediate financial support for flood affected residents with the emergency hardship grant and the essential services hardship assistance grant. There were also grants for those without insurance to replace household contents, have repairs done or to reconnect to essential services like power and sewerage, and these grants have been an absolute lifesaver to many. I want to commend Minister Leeanne Enoch for coming out to the community recovery hub and visiting people and listening to them. I think her listening to them meant so much.

Floods impose a significant cost on our economy as well. Billions of dollars have already been spent on this year's flood recovery and then there is the lost productivity, supply chain disruptions and loss of assets. These costs will grow each year. In fact, by 2060 it is expected that flooding will cost the national economy \$40 billion a year. To reduce these costs, we have to redesign and rebuild resilient cities, and the Palaszczuk government is doing that with the \$741 million Resilient Homes Fund. With changes to our climate, we should be preparing for more severe rainfall and flood events as well as more unpredictability in the way the events behave. Giving flood victims the opportunity to rebuild their

homes and design them to be more flood resilient or offering them a voluntary buyback of their homes will ensure that they do not have to bear the high personal costs of flooding ever again. I am extremely grateful to the major general and I thank him for his time.