




Speech By
Joseph Kelly

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

Record of Proceedings, 17 March 2022

ADJOURNMENT

McDowall, Mr M

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (6.22 pm): Max McDowall was a young man who grew up in our community, not far from my house, not far in age from my kids, attending the same schools and no doubt enjoying our community in the way that my kids have. I never got the chance to know Max, and I regret this deeply. Max was studying at UQ, doing a degree in environmental science majoring in marine biology. After a false start in engineering, he switched to that course because he knew it would really make a difference in our world and it fitted with his values. Max was a doer, not a preacher.

When the students at Cav Road would turn on all the taps in the bathrooms as a joke, Max would enjoy the joke with his mates, but then sneak back to turn off the taps. He was a doer, not a preacher. He designed a rat-proof composting system for his house, because he did not want to trap and kill rats. Prevention is better than cure and it fitted his values. He was a doer, not a preacher.

He could have gotten lifts to many places. His loving parents would have driven him, but he was so concerned about fossil fuels that he chose to ride. He was a doer, not a preacher. That is what Max was doing the day he finished work as a teacher aide at Rochedale, working with kids with significant disabilities—something he had a real capacity and love of. Again, he was doer, not a preacher. He was riding his bike to his second job at QUT when he was hit by a bus and killed.

Our world lost someone special. We need a lot more doers. Max's family was devastated. They are strong and are working to heal. They will take kind words and prayers, but, like Max, they want action, not talk. They want nothing more than for every person to be safe and they believe Max's situation was avoidable and the intersection could be made safe for cyclists, pedestrians and motorists.

The coroner has determined not to hold an inquest. I have written to the Attorney-General respectfully requesting that an inquest be held. In that correspondence, I have outlined the reasons that I believe there are grounds to hold an inquest so I will not put them on record here. I repeat the respectful request to the Attorney-General here in this place on behalf of Max's family and our community.

Max's family are doers. As I was driving to the coast to visit my mum last weekend I saw them, near where the accident occurred, collecting signatures on petitions and trying to talk to cyclists and other pedestrians to get more data about this crossing. I have held off talking about this matter publicly while an investigation has been underway. Like Max's family, I think there are things the Brisbane City Council can do immediately to make that crossing safer. I would call on the council to listen to Max's parents and immediately change the signalisation of that intersection. As the coroner pointed out, the signalisation is unusual and, in my opinion, very unsafe. It could be changed and that could save lives. I think Max would want that because he was a doer, not a preacher.