




Speech By
Hon. Leanne Enoch

MEMBER FOR ALGESTER

Record of Proceedings, 26 May 2022

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Floods, Recovery

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (10.22 am): Many communities across Queensland, impacted by rising cost-of-living pressures and the flow-on effects of the COVID-19 pandemic now face further hardship with the flooding rain of recent weeks and months. The Queensland government has been quick to mobilise support and provide assistance to affected communities. Grants and support services have been activated for people in areas hard-hit by the flooding. Community recovery hubs were very quickly set up in impacted communities. These hubs are places where people can speak to community recovery workers, apply for grants, access emotional support and be referred to other support organisations.

As of today, payments totalling around \$23.8 million have been distributed, benefitting more than 100,000 people impacted by flooding events since late February. Applications for financial assistance continue to be processed by my department as quickly as possible. These grants, of up to \$180 per person and \$900 for a family of five or more, support eligible residents experiencing financial hardship as a result of recent flooding events. They help cover the costs of essential items, such as food, medication and clothing, for people who have been directly impacted by this disaster. I know the Premier's announcement this morning of a \$175 cost-of-living rebate will be incredibly welcome news for all Queenslanders, especially those impacted by recent devastating flooding events.

The peak body representing the network of 127 Queensland government funded neighbourhood and community centres across the state report that even prior to the recent flooding events, there has been a significant increase in the demand for the supports and services available through these centres. Increasingly, our neighbourhood and community centres have had to support Queenslanders in crisis moments, many of whom are presenting at centres for the very first time.

Earlier this year, the Palaszczuk government provided a one-off funding boost of \$20,000 to each of the 127 state funded neighbourhood and community centres across Queensland to support centres to respond to the increased demand on centres since the onset of COVID-19. In addition to this \$2.54 million funding boost, we have also delivered on our \$1.7 million commitment to place Neighbourhood and Care Army Connect workers in 15 centres across Queensland. This year has presented many challenges to so many Queenslanders already impacted by more than two years of a global pandemic and rising cost-of-living pressures. The Queensland government will continue to work with local communities and our service partners to ensure the necessary supports are in place.

I join with my colleagues and others across the chamber in acknowledging that today is National Sorry Day, a day to reflect on past policies that saw the horrific removal of First Nations children, to acknowledge the sometimes ugly and uncomfortable truth of our shared history, and to lean on the strength of our collective humanity as we commit to action beyond sorry. It is a day of reflection and a day to reaffirm our commitment to voice, treaty and truth, something that has seen a renewed

commitment from our federal government and a commitment that the Palaszczuk government continues to honour.