**Speech By**

# Hon. Mark Furner

## MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE

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## MOTION

### Death of Queen Elizabeth II and Accession of King Charles III, Address of Condolence and Congratulations

**Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (10.37 am): I join with other members in this place in paying my respects in this motion of condolence. The death of any individual is a sad affair. In this case, the Queen was an individual who was very much in the public eye for all of her life—from the print age to the radio and television ages and, finally, the modern social media age. The Queen's death has impacted Queenslanders in many different ways. Everyone should have the choice to deal with this in their own way, but we should not let death define an individual. A person's life, meaning and place on this earth are much more than their final hours. This is the time to remember the Queen's life and how her life impacted Queenslanders.

For many rural and regional Queenslanders there is a fondness for the Queen, seen in the halls and town centres that still have her portrait hanging proudly on the wall and, for many, part of the oath that they swore to various offices and organisations and in loyalty toasts. Far too often, the memory of the Queen was for the messages of sympathy that were conveyed during times in which Queensland was impacted by drought, fire, floods or cyclones. The Queen had an understanding and appreciation of the devastations that were impacting everyday Queenslanders. The final visit of the Queen saw her take part in a reception in the aftermath of natural disasters. In many cases on her visits to Queensland over the decades, so many lined up to get a glimpse or to see a wave.

From the very beginning, Queensland's agriculture sector played a part. I am informed that the wedding present given by the people of Queensland back in 1947 was 500 cases of tinned pineapple. I understand that these were not kept but rather distributed to people who at the time were still on wartime-like rationing.

Some of the defining moments of Queensland, be it the 1982 Commonwealth Games or Expo 88, had a visit. For many it may have been a passing visit or even not remembered, and for many who have now moved to this state they may even be events upon which they do not form a memory. Now as a state and a member of the Commonwealth, we have a new king—a king who has a keen interest in the environment and what role that will have on our planet as well as agriculture and our oceans, with views expressed in 2008 no doubt felt by many in the agriculture sector when at the time he said—

Seasons are becoming earlier and growth patterns are altering. Disease-carrying insects are no longer being killed off over the winter. And on a global scale, weather patterns are changing, too.

In 2018 there was concern about the Great Barrier Reef and the need for action. There was a statement from him at that time—

I have no doubt in my mind that this will need to be a central aspect of the rapidly emerging concept of a sustainable 'blue economy', through which sustainable economic development is achieved via the wise use of ocean resources.

I had the good fortune to meet His Majesty in Mossman Gorge during his 2018 visit to Queensland for the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games. We discussed the reef then, including the impacts of sediment run-off and the expansion of efforts to repair that damage. I also had the opportunity to tell him about my previous career in the Transport Workers' Union. Following that, he referred to me as 'the chap who looks after those lorry drivers'. I look forward, as many do, for his next official visit to Queensland as King Charles III. For many Queenslanders, the Queen's passing was a final link to the 20th century. Queensland is a very different place now than it was in 1952. We mourn one's passing but also acknowledge the constant in many lives and the impact that one person can have. Vale, Queen Elizabeth II.