




Speech By
Hon. Mark Ryan

MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD

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MOTION

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

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (10.29 am): For most citizens of the Commonwealth, their lives have known one constant: that Queen Elizabeth II was their monarch and that she was dedicated and genuine in her service to them. Whilst some citizens choose service through employment or volunteerism, Queen Elizabeth II had service imposed on her, and she inspired the world with the manner in which she wholeheartedly accepted and remained committed to that duty for 70 years. That longevity of service and loyalty to duty, her oath and her people is an insight into the extraordinary commitment of a most distinguished individual.

While she did not live in Queensland, she was well known to Queenslanders and well respected for her dedication to the people of Queensland, particularly in the efforts that she made to meet them and to be present as Queensland matured and changed. While our ancient land has only known the British monarchy for a relatively short time, it is a sign of the Queen's presence that she was the first serving monarch to visit Australia and Queensland and that she became a regular presence in the lives of our citizens.

While I was reflecting on this condolence motion I came across some words from one of our federal colleagues, Andrew Leigh. I thought it spoke to the change that happened during Her Majesty's reign. He related a story. On 14 February 1954 the new queen, Queen Elizabeth II, who was 27 years old, paid an unofficial visit to Old Parliament House. The Speaker, Archie Cameron, asked if she would like to see the House of Representatives, suggesting that it would be 'okay' because it was a Sunday and it was a long time since King Charles I. Queen Elizabeth said yes. The doors were unlocked and she spent seven minutes inside the House of Representatives, making her the first British monarch to enter the people's house for over 300 years.

Traditions can change and, while Queen Elizabeth was a constant throughout her reign, there was much change that happened in Queensland while she was our monarch. Often her visits to our great state coincided with those moments of great change—coincided with those celebrations of Queensland maturing and becoming a more progressive state. For instance, when she visited in 1963 she officially opened some oil infrastructure which helped open up exploration within the Surat Basin. She also visited surf lifesaving clubs not only in her role as patron of the Royal Life Saving Society but also to be an inspiration to those who served their community as volunteers.

In 1970 she visited many parts of our state—Longreach, Mount Isa, Mackay, Townsville, Cairns and Cooktown—showing her dedication to regional Queensland and Queenslanders throughout the entire state. In particular, she went to Longreach to acknowledge the 50th anniversary of Qantas, a great Queensland company and a company which, of course, helped Queensland mature. In 1977 she officially opened the QEII Jubilee Sports Centre. It marked the development of Brisbane into a

world-class sports city. Only five years later she opened the Commonwealth Games—at that very same stadium—that put Queensland on the map. She returned in 1988 for Expo 88 and attended CHOGM in 2002.

Perhaps one of the most distinguished visits was when she returned to Queensland in 2011—not only to visit citizens but also to acknowledge that Queenslanders had been knocked down by natural disasters and had stood up again. She commented on the resilience of our citizens. Although she could not attend the Commonwealth Games in 2018, I know that Charles ably represented her and continued that inspiration of her service and dedication to others.

There are many things that you can say about a long reign. It is not just about longevity; it is about how you use it. The Queen's dedication to service and duty is an inspiration to others who also serve and take an oath of service, be it members of parliament, judges, governors or police officers. We thank the Queen for her service and we wish King Charles a long reign.