




Speech By
Michael Berkman

MEMBER FOR MAIWAR

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT

Federal Election

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (2.37 pm): I will start with a rhetorical question today: what do you imagine when you think of hubris, entitlement and fear all mixed together? I am generally very reluctant to personally highlight another elected representative, but I am going to make an exception today for some recent indiscretions of the outgoing member for Ryan, Julian Simmonds. He has spent his first—and, fingers crossed, only—term as our federal MP taking our community for granted. Now he is going to quite extraordinary lengths to try to save his skin with some breathtaking dishonesty.

The *Courier-Mail* has reported two stories in two days about Mr Simmonds distributing letters of support or appreciation without the permission of the authors. First, it was a priest from Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic parish in Kenmore, Mark Franklin, and today we read that Mr George Hulse OAM, the immediate past president of the Toowong RSL, has had his letter of appreciation distributed by the LNP without his consent. I will table those letters for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 8 February 2022, from the Parish Priest, Our Lady of the Rosary Parish, Very Rev. Mark Franklin, titled 'Letter of endorsement for Julian Simmonds MHR seat of Ryan' [653](#).

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 17 January 2022, from the President, 1 Field Squadron Group RAE Association, Mr George Hulse OAM, to the federal member for Ryan, Mr Julian Simmonds MP, titled 'Letter of appreciation' [654](#).

A third letter has come to our attention today from a registered charity, the Pink Elephants Support Network, that also seems to endorse Mr Simmonds. We all know that charities risk deregistration for promoting a political candidate, so we can only assume that Mr Simmonds has used this letter without the permission of the signatory. I also table that letter for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Letter, undated, from the Chief Executive Officer, Pink Elephants Support Networks, Ms Samantha Payne, to a resident regarding the Leave for Loss Campaign [652](#).

There are other letters that the LNP is distributing locally, some of which are just plain bizarre. One claims that Julian has been a local fixture in the area for 40-plus years, which is odd given that he will celebrate his 40th birthday in 2025. This letter also says its author believes 'Julian is strongly rooted in the area'.

Government members: Ha, ha!

Mr BERKMAN: I cannot entirely disagree with that. 'Rooted' is not the word I would choose, but Mr Simmonds has good reason to be scared this election. I will table that one.

Tabled paper: Letter, undated, from John Carew Swim School, Mr David Carew, regarding the Federal member for Ryan, Mr Julian Simmonds MP [655](#).

The most infuriating thing is that Liberals like Julian Simmonds take the west side for granted. When westside locals want action on climate change, Julian Simmonds keeps on supporting 114 new coal and gas mines. At home he claims to support action on climate change, but in Canberra he votes

with Barnaby Joyce and the climate deniers. When westside locals want a national integrity commission, he votes down the Greens' attempt to create one. The Liberals are so used to winning seats on the west side without really trying that they have forgotten whom they are supposed to be serving.

I am so proud that the Greens have been putting a bit of vision back into politics on the west side. My dear friend and St Lucia local Elizabeth Watson-Brown is looking more and more likely to boot out the LNP. She wants a transition plan for coal workers; 100 per cent renewable energy; dental and mental health into Medicare; and a national ICAC. She wants to bring the pension age back to 65; raise all social security payments above the poverty line; and free university and TAFE. Since our wins in Maiwar in 2017 and 2020, the most common feedback I have had is that people are surprised that someone is listening to them. Even when we might not agree on everything, people from Fig Tree Pocket to Auchenflower and beyond know that the Greens will be their voice in parliament.