




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR CAIRNS

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ADJOURNMENT

Cairns Bula 7s

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (8.33 pm): Tonight I rise to commend the 2022 Bula 7s Invitational Rugby Tournament that was held in Cairns on 14 and 15 October. The competition is a proud initiative of the Fijian Community Association of Far North Queensland and a wonderful addition to the region's sporting calendar. This is the second year the event has been hosted. It was my absolute pleasure to be in attendance and to be part of a state government that not only respects and appreciates our Fijian community but also backs it up with tangible support on the ground.

The Bula 7s tournament was first run in 2021 and, despite the uncertainty of the COVID pandemic, the inaugural competition was a success due to the energy, commitment and passion of the organisers. In the first year, players and teams came from all around Queensland as well as Victoria, New South Wales, Western Australia, the Northern Territory and the Torres Strait. This year we saw even greater representation with the added dimension of teams who fielded players with diverse cultural backgrounds from Africa, the Cook Islands, Italy, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Tonga as well as a strong contingent of First Nations peoples. All up, 220 players participated in 20 teams.

If the strength of any community is in its diversity, we saw that power in full flight at the Bula 7s with not only superb athletic and physical sporting endeavours on display but also a fantastic sense of community pride and harmony, which help build a much needed unity and spirit within our community. To that end, the tournament features role models and ambassadors who champion youth resilience and opportunities through training and the workforce. More broadly, the Pasifika community make an outstanding contribution to our region in many walks of life. Through sharing their wonderful culture to sport and business, the Pasifika community are positive and significant contributors to the social and economic fabric and wellbeing of the tropical north.

Additionally, the further advantages in promoting an active and healthy community are immense and cannot be underestimated as we see men and women of various ages participating for the challenge, camaraderie and fitness sport can bring. Undoubtedly, the benefits of the Bula 7s tournament reach far and wide, with the visitation of players, teams and rugby enthusiasts from across the region and nation boosting the tourism economy and delivering a sound return to all of our hotels, restaurants and various tourism products.

The Bula 7s is set to become an iconic event for the Far North and one that will tell the story of the tropical north for years to come. As I said, it is a spirited competition that brings together our different cultures, heritage and backgrounds. Most importantly, I offer my sincere congratulations to the organisers and players.