




Speech By
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MOTION

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

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (11.18 am): The passing of Queen Elizabeth II is a sorrowful moment and one that has brought great sadness to so many. It was a day many of us simply did not believe would arrive, but tragically it did. Her Majesty was more than a monarch; she defined an era. Our world is one of continual changes yet she remained a constant presence. To so many, Her Majesty was a source of comfort and a face of stability. Nearly 90 per cent of Australians have only ever known one monarch in their lifetimes. The Queen's reign spanned 16 Australian prime ministers—starting with Sir Robert Menzies—16 governors-general—starting with Sir William John McKell—and included 16 visits to Australia. Think of the weight cast on her shoulders in 1952 at the tender age of 25 years young. A reign of 70 years and 214 days must rightly be admired.

The final years of her reign may have been some of the toughest. She kept her people together through a pandemic and reminded us that 'while we may have more still to endure, better days will return'. For seven decades she gave ceaseless public service to the people of the Commonwealth. She has seen communism rise and fall, wars won and lost, leaders come and go, despots stand up and be overthrown, the best and the worst of society.

She has been a voice and a figurehead of our time. She has been a mother, a grandmother and a great-grandmother of sorts to many the world over. Lest we never forget that she was in fact a mother to four, grandmother to eight and great-grandmother to 12. Her Majesty not only performed the role of monarch with grace and diplomacy, but she was also a working mother. As shadow minister for women, I can only applaud the way she dutifully fulfilled her responsibilities whilst caring for four children. There is no denying that it must have been quite the balancing act trying to juggle motherhood with royal duty over so many decades—a constant battle between her personal responsibilities and her role as Queen.

As possibly the most famous working mother in the world, she upheld traditions while embodying change. As a young woman she worked as a motor mechanic with the military during World War II. She so often proved to be a woman of many talents. On her 21st birthday she made the following pledge—

I declare before you all that my whole life whether it be long or short shall be devoted to your service and the service of our great imperial family to which we all belong.

She was true to her word to her final breath. I still remember so vividly as a little girl singing *God Save the Queen* every morning in assembly at school.

We have lost one of the most meaningful world figures of our lifetime and I take this moment to say thank you for everything. I also take the opportunity to confirm my allegiance to King Charles III. God save the King.