




Speech By
Samuel O'Connor

MEMBER FOR BONNEY

Record of Proceedings, 26 May 2022

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT

Floods, Recovery Assistance

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (2.19 pm): Many members have discussed the impact of the recent floods on Queenslanders. We need to look at what we are doing between flood events to reduce the long-term impact on our environment and build the resilience of our communities, particularly because we know climate change will make these events more frequent and severe.

Today I want to raise the story of Bonita from Chambers Flat. In 2013 she bought her dream property right where the Logan River meets Norris Creek. Bonita thought she would retire there amongst the trees with her sheep and gardens and beautiful German-style home. Unfortunately, in the 2017 floods the river rose 26 metres and inundated her entire property, leaving only her house on a dry raised pad. There was severe erosion of her section of riverbank. Bonita initially went to the Logan council for support. She got 50 *Lomandra* plants to put along the riverbank to thicken the undergrowth. At this stage, she was not aware that the government was responsible for the riverbank. Those plants, and more, of the bank washed away in the 2021 flood event.

I have been out to Bonita's property following the most recent floods, and the riverbank is completely destroyed. There are enormous chasms as more and more land gets sucked out into the Logan River. She has already had one large blue gum fall into it. Another has had all of the land slip from underneath it, so it is only a matter of time before it goes too. Bonita has also lost sheep in the river, and her partner almost lost his life when the land began to slip beneath him while he was on the ride-on mower.

Bonita reached out to her local MP, the member for Logan, who came to visit. She tells me she did not hear back from him for months, but when he came out again this year the advice Bonita says he gave to her partner was, 'Just sell it to someone from down south who doesn't know what it looked like before.' This is certainly not a solution. I find this claim, the suggestion that a government MP mislead a potential buyer, absolutely staggering.

Mr POWER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. No. 1, that is completely false and misleading. I also take great personal offence—great personal offence—and ask the member to withdraw that disgusting slur.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): If you believe a matter is misleading, there is a process to deal with that. I am sure you are aware of it. Member for Bonney, the member has taken personal offence and asks that you withdraw.

Mr O'CONNOR: I withdraw. That was a direct quote from a constituent.

Mr POWER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The withdrawal needs to be unqualified. That does not satisfy the standard for an unqualified withdrawal. I ask you to withdraw in an unqualified manner.

Mr O'CONNOR: I withdraw unreservedly. I also wrote to the minister for the environment and the Deputy Premier last October about this issue but have so far received no response. Bonita has now made the difficult decision to put her name down to have her house resumed. Investing in proper revegetation and upper catchments will be worth it; not just for people like Bonita but also our environment. Healthy Land and Water tell me it would be three to five times cheaper to do preventative work to shore up our banks rather than deal with the inevitable recovery costs. We need to do better to build resistance in ecosystems to make sure there is less chance of a tragic situation like Bonita's happening to any other Queenslander.