




Speech By
Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

Record of Proceedings, 16 March 2023

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Johnson, Mr VG, OAM

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (10.23 am): I too rise to speak on this condolence motion for my mate Vaughan Johnson. Today we have heard from all speakers so far about that gruff exterior, the swearing and the hard handshake. I have to disagree with the Premier: that handshake lives on in his son, Michael. Western Queensland and Queensland will not escape that handshake for some time. Aside from that, as we have also heard, Vaughan was just a big teddy bear—maybe a Tambo Teddy.

I want to share one story and it is similar to what has been shared by my leader and also the member for Nanango. Members know this job is tough and ministers know this job is tougher, not on us but on our families. When the LNP won government in 2012, I basically left my amazing wife, Taryn, home alone with five kids aged under 11. On the day of Vaughan's funeral, I commented on my social media that both Taryn and I credit him with saving our marriage during those three years when we were in government.

Not every parliamentary Thursday, but most, as chief government whip VJ would come up to me after question time and quietly say, 'Go home.' We never expected it, but Taryn so appreciated those early marks. Vaughan did not expect anything in return but I can assure you, Mr Speaker, that every Christmas there was always a carton of VB for Vaughan from the Powell family. That left an indelible mark on my family.

After his retirement, Vaughan spent a lot more time on his Noosa hinterland property. One day, tragically, he rolled his quad bike on top of himself and ended up in Nambour Hospital. They were very dark days for him, both physically and mentally. Taryn baked biscuits, my kids made him cards and he often got a visit from the Powell family during his time in that hospital. I am glad he made it through that time.

All of us here have appreciated his contribution to the electorate of Gregory. We have all acknowledged his passion for regional and remote Queensland and for Queensland as a whole. However, I am particularly grateful for his care and concern for my family and me. I know he felt that for his own family, who are present here today. All I can say is: thanks, mate. Rest in peace.