



Speech By  
**Hon. Craig Crawford**


**MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER**

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## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Seniors Month**

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Seniors and Disability Services) (10.06 am): Seniors Month is almost over. This October we have been celebrating the theme of social connections with more than 1,050 events across the state engaging an estimated 140,000 people. Almost one in five Queenslanders, almost one million people, are seniors aged over 65 and by 2050 the figure is expected to be more than 1.8 million.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members, I ask you to please keep your background conversations to a minimum. It is getting way too loud in the chamber. My apologies for the interruption, Minister.

**Mr CRAWFORD:** Seniors Month is a time to recognise the valuable contribution made to our great lifestyles by seniors who are our workers, volunteers, carers, babysitters, the bank of mum and dad, and community leaders. It is also a chance to talk about the hip-pocket relief and cost-of-living support that is available to pensioners and seniors.

Savvy Queensland seniors and pensioners are saving millions of dollars in travel costs thanks to generous Palaszczuk government concessions for bus, train and ferry fares. In 2022-23, seniors saved more than \$10 million on the South-East Queensland public transport network through the 50 per cent seniors fare discount and the One, Two, Free initiative. Last year alone, more than 270,000 Queenslanders pocketed savings on public transport thanks to their Seniors Card +go. More than 110,000 seniors and pensioners travelled the state on the iconic rail service and bucket-list experience that is the Spirit of Queensland.

I want to share a story with the House. Last Friday, on the Cairns train station platform, I met a lovely elderly couple, Linda and Alan. For the first time Linda was delighted to be taking advantage of the half-price ticket on the Spirit of Queensland to visit family in Townsville at a cost of \$25 each way. Mr Speaker, with fuel prices what they are right now, for \$25 she would barely have got outside the southern boundary of your electorate, let alone made the 700-kilometre round trip to Townsville. The couple were full of praise for the Palaszczuk government's discounted fares and support for seniors, which has allowed them to stay connected with their family in Townsville.

Seniors Month celebrations will conclude with Grandparents Day this Sunday. I encourage all Queenslanders who are fortunate to still have grandparents or special older people in their lives to show them some love. Get on the phone, visit them, send them a text and let them know how much you care.