



Speech By  
**Hon. Meaghan Scanlon**


**MEMBER FOR GAVEN**

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Record of Proceedings, 15 November 2023

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Housing Supply; Bushfires, Tara**

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing) (10.03 am): Right across our state thousands of tradies are helping to deliver our big housing build. We are offering free TAFE and apprenticeships to grow our construction workforce because we have a lot of homes to build.

Our record investment is delivering for people in need in regional Queensland. Just last week, the member Rockhampton turned the sod on a new project in his community. Works are well underway on a new 40-room youth foyer in Townsville. Shovels are in the ground on a new 18-apartment complex in Yorkeys Knob, which is soon to be joined by construction at Earlville and Parramatta Park in Far North Queensland. We have new social homes in Cannonvale and new modular homes on their way to Gladstone South. That follows new modular homes arriving in Eidsvold, Longreach, Hughenden and Roma, with 11 more to come to Gympie very soon. The team has just finished a new development in Roma in partnership with a community housing provider, which is accessible for older Queenslanders and those living with a disability. Our Big Build is delivering thousands of homes across the state, including in regional Queensland.

Of course, regional Queensland is no stranger to natural disasters and our teams have responded quickly to help those in need. Last month the community of Tara was devastated by bushfires. I am pleased to advise the House that, after we moved 23 caravans to the showgrounds, demountable homes have now arrived at the former caravan park. The concrete has been poured and utility works are well underway to make sure those places are ready early next month.

I would like to acknowledge the work of our frontline staff who are helping the community through this incredibly tough time. Our housing staff have been on the ground, making sure that anyone who needs help has received it. To date, they have helped 62 families find temporary accommodation—families such as Leandra Ashwell and her husband, Leslie, who are determined to rebuild and enjoy their retirement in Tara. Leandra has moved into the showgrounds with her family, continuing life as normal as possible, including celebrations for daughter Johanna's formal and year 12 graduation. She said—

We brought her dress from the Philippines; it was the only thing she saved from the fire. That's the only thing she took, not even any of her academic medals. The staff are looking after us well, even our two dogs, Possum and Max ...

The dogs also have new places to live. She said, 'We're happy.' Ms Ashwell combines full-time care of Leslie with singing in the local choir and volunteering at the library. The family have lived in Tara for almost 10 years. They lost everything: their home, car and trailers. There is a long road ahead for them and the community, which has well and truly felt the brunt of the bushfires.

We are delivering to make sure that that community is supported. From the community itself to the firefighters, our housing team, council and everyone in-between, we have seen the community rally together to look after each other, which is something that I think Queenslanders are proud of.