




Speech By
Ann Leahy

MEMBER FOR WARREGO

Record of Proceedings, 7 March 2024

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Cairns, Disaster Assistance; Local Government Elections

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (2.00 pm): Many in this House would recall the photos of aircraft submerged in water at the Cairns Airport following Tropical Cyclone Jasper. Some critical industry businesses in the Cairns region are struggling to recover. They are feeling abandoned when it comes to government assistance measures. I am advised that up to 35 Cairns businesses do not qualify for assistance because of the number of employees they have.

Skytech Aviation employs up to 50 staff in specialised aviation maintenance and repair of fixed-wing and rotary aircraft. This business suffered over a million dollars in damage, with a metre of water through the business. I am advised that Skytech have not received any assistance.

Cairns is a critical aviation base for Cape York and South-East Asia. These businesses are critical for tourism and for the ongoing disaster recovery, yet this Labor government has abandoned these businesses. Dawsons Engineering, another longstanding local business of 30 years and a key employer in the region, has experienced millions of dollars in damage—again, another business that feels abandoned by the Labor government. I call on the Premier and minister to stop ignoring these critical businesses and get them the help they need.

Queenslanders are going to the polls next weekend to determine their local government representatives for the next four years. Without any fanfare—and in the midst of cyclones, floods, bushfires and whatever else Mother Nature serves up—these hardworking people do their best, rising to local challenges.

On behalf of the LNP, I would like to put on record our sincere thanks to the mayors and councillors who have chosen to retire for their dedication to the community and also wish those seeking re-election the very best. In this regard, I congratulate those mayors who have been elected unopposed: Sam O'Toole at Balonne Shire Council; Nev Ferrier at Banana Shire Council; Rick Britton at Boulia Shire Council; Ernie Camp at Burke Shire Council; Francis Murray at Diamantina Shire Council; Barry Hughes at Etheridge Shire Council; Matt Burnett at Gladstone Regional Council; Lawrence Springborg at Goondiwindi Regional Council; Ramon Jayo at Hinchinbrook Regional Council; Kelly Veve at Isaac Regional Council; Tony Rayner at Longreach Regional Council; Angela Toppin at Mareeba Regional Council; Peter Flannery at Moreton Bay City Council; Shaun Radnedge at Murweh Shire Council; and John Wharton at Richmond Shire Council. I congratulate all those councillors who have been elected unopposed in Moreton Bay City Council, Banana Shire Council and Isaac Regional Council. To all those mayors and councillors, I pass on the very best wishes from the LNP for their term ahead.