




Speech By
Hon. Ann Leahy

MEMBER FOR WARREGO

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Volunteering, Parliamentary Inquiry

 **Hon. A LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers) (2.37 pm): Volunteers make a vital social and economic contribution to our state. On behalf of the Queensland parliament, I thank all of those volunteers who joined us today at Parliament House. However, it is alarming that volunteering participation has fallen by more than 10 per cent over the past three years. This has impacted on many community organisations' ability to deliver for Queenslanders and respond in times of emergency.

Today as part of the LNP's determination to reverse this trend our government will be establishing the Supporting our Volunteers parliamentary inquiry. The inquiry will focus on the following areas: restrictions on volunteering caused by red tape; barriers to volunteering for non-volunteers; current restrictions adversely limiting active volunteers; and opportunities for diversification of the volunteer workforce.

Establishing the inquiry delivers on a commitment in our government's 100-day plan. I have been engaging with volunteers and volunteer organisations, and they are telling me there are a range of obstacles stopping people from volunteering—whether it is time, health, financial constraints or just simply burnout. There is so much untapped potential in this sector, as long as we can address these obstacles.

The Crisafulli government wants to be part of the solution with our volunteers. That is why we are committed to removing those barriers and creating pathways to volunteering. We want to make it easier for people to volunteer. This inquiry is the first step towards that. We want to make sure that anyone who has a passion to make a difference in their local community has every opportunity to become a volunteer. The parliamentary committee will be tasked with delivering a report to government by September 2025. Public contributions to this inquiry are vital, and I encourage those groups and individuals with an interest to get involved when the inquiry opens. The experiences of volunteers on the front line need to be heard so that the barriers they face can be addressed. Volunteers require not only our gratitude but also our ongoing support and recognition to continue their good work. By working together, we can reverse the decline in volunteer numbers.