




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE

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MAIDEN SPEECH

 **Miss DOOLAN** (Pumicestone—LNP) (3.00 pm): I rise today with humility to address this chamber as a member of the 58th Parliament of Queensland. It is an extraordinary honour to represent my community. Pumicestone has given a young person the opportunity to serve them with a fresh perspective, and I am deeply committed to doing everyone back home proud every day that I have the privilege of being in this House.

My family and I have called the seaside town of Beachmere home for over a decade. In this time we have seen the impact of a youth crime, health, cost-of-living and housing crisis on our idyllic community. I put my hand up to serve because I understand that a good government can turn things around. I wanted to be part of the change the LNP was offering Queensland. I am thankful that the Liberal National Party believed that a 22-year-old who has never left home had an important contribution to make to this House, that the views of young Queenslanders like me matter and that I could bring a different and important perspective.

This is not the first time our party has broken new ground. We are the party of Sir Neville Bonner, the first Indigenous person elected to any parliament in our nation; we are the party of Irene Longman, the first female member of Queensland parliament; and we are the party of Lawrence Springborg, elected at 21—still the youngest ever elected to this House and our current party president. Although I was just a few months off beating Lawrence's record, I am honoured to be the youngest woman elected to the Queensland parliament and the first person to rise in this place born in the 21st century. The Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games will be the first Olympics that I will see held on Australian soil.

While these records make for nice trivia, what they represent actually means something. I may not have decades of professional experience, but what I do have is different: an important perspective. Some 18.2 per cent of Australians are generation Z; however, if I use the common definition of gen Z, I am the only member of this House from that generation. If I use a more generous definition, we may be able to sneak the members for Sandgate and Callide into gen Z. This is important because our generation faces, and will continue to face, pressures previous generations have not had to deal with. Our generation faces the daunting prospect of never being able to own our own home. Our generation is witnessing a decline in mental health, with increasing rates of anxiety and depression exacerbated by the impacts of social media. Our generation faces the rapid transformation of the job market, driven by automation and advancements in technology. Many of the jobs we are training for today may not exist tomorrow.

Being young is not my only perspective. The diverse upbringing I have had—like many others here—is something I also bring to this place. My family's story is a testament to the boundless opportunities that Australia offers to those who work hard. My grandparents, who fled South Africa during the apartheid era, chose Australia as their new home because of the promise of equal opportunity and reward for effort. With very little money in their pockets, my grandma, a teacher in South Africa,

worked as a strawberry picker on Wyatt Roy's family farm before retraining as an early learning educator. My grandfather worked in a tool shop and eventually became a small business owner. He learned how to owner-build houses and built his family home. He passed on his skills to his children, leading to building impressive lives.

My father's side of the family has a rich history rooted in the hard work and determination that defined their lives on a dairy farm in Narangba. With eight children to raise, my grandparents dedicated themselves to building a life that could sustain and empower their family, despite many challenges. My grandmother balanced her role as a mother with work as a teacher, shaping young minds while also shaping the future of her own children. Her dedication to education and to her church community was a source of inspiration to everyone around her.

My parents grew up in households that had to struggle to make ends meet, but their families instilled in them the value of hard work and a determination to create a better future. High school teachers by profession, they held extra jobs on weekends and after school because they understood that success comes through dedicated effort. I have learned from them the value of resilience and hard work and the importance of strong families. Since I was nine months old, my childhood consisted of regularly travelling to South Africa with my mum and her tourism students where they would volunteer in orphanages. This was an almost yearly trip with my family until my last trip in 2015. The experience taught me the importance of compassion and the power of community and gave me a deep appreciation for the opportunities we have living here in Australia.

In 2012 my mum took a break from teaching and ventured into small business, buying a newsagency in Redcliffe. My experiences working alongside her highlighted the role small businesses play in our Moreton Bay community, particularly those that serve a broad section of society. This showed me, from an early age, how we must ease the burden of red tape and regulation on businesses and let those who work hard keep more of what they earn. Most of all, my family has instilled in me the importance of community, education, aspiration and, above all, hard work. In recent years I have balanced my studies with work as a teacher aide, being a reptile handler and, more recently, working as a program coordinator at a not-for-profit where I was educating young people about energy efficiency. If there was any doubt about my gen Z credentials, I also had a supporting lead role in a Netflix TV series!

Inspired by my love for my community and the values of the Liberal National Party, I am here to contribute meaningfully in this place by advocating for practical, community focused policies which support education, environmental responsibility and opportunities for young people. My experiences have equipped me with the skills to engage with diverse groups of people and to get the balance right between progress and sustainability. That is how we will deliver a strong, prosperous future for Pumicestone.

All of these experiences have led me to being here. It was a campaign that asked a lot of me, my family, my friends and my supporters. Many of my political opponents accused me of not having enough experience but, ironically, their attacks became one very hard-earned life experience. I found resilience I did not know I had to survive and thrive during the campaign. I give this speech during a time in which bullying is in the national spotlight, with laws before the federal parliament to address bullying through social media. I know firsthand the devastating impacts of bullying. During my school years I was bullied relentlessly—an experience that ignited a determination in me to stand up for those who could not stand up for themselves. That is not to say it did not leave scars, but those scars made me tough. So, when I was on the receiving end of what the *Courier-Mail* described as an 'ageist and sexist union attack', I remained steadfast that I would not be silenced. These experiences only strengthened my resolve to represent the people of Pumicestone with integrity and to fight against any form of intimidation, whether it be in schools, at the polling booths or in the political arena. I am incredibly proud to be part of an LNP government, under the leadership of David Crisafulli, which has made a commitment to lead the nation in tackling this pressing issue.

The rise of social media has changed the landscape of bullying, making it inescapable for young people. Bullying is no longer confined to the schoolyard; it follows young people into their homes, affecting their mental health. We cannot turn a blind eye to this crisis and we will implement a comprehensive strategy to address this issue head-on. I have already had conversations with local parents who have told me about their children being bullied and the devastating impact it has had on their families. These stories are stark reminders of the urgency of this issue and the need for decisive action. As someone who understands the challenges young people face today, I am committed to ensuring our schools are safe, supportive environments where every student can thrive. The battle of the campaign was worth it. It was worth it to fight for what I believe in and for the people of Pumicestone.

Pumicestone is a wonderful electorate and, every minute I stand in this chamber, the responsibility the people of Pumicestone have entrusted in me will not be forgotten. Our electorate is evolving, with more young families choosing to call Pumicestone home. We are proud to be a diverse community, yet we still have one of the highest median ages in Queensland. Pumicestone faces the same issues as the rest of the state, but there are some that are particularly relevant.

Our aging population comes with significant healthcare challenges, including limited local services and long commutes to Brisbane. That is why I will be taking up the fight to reduce ambulance ramping, improve emergency department triaging, streamline hospital discharges and cut surgery waitlists, delivering faster and better care. With investments in frontline staff, better diagnostic services and expanded mental health support, I am committed to providing Pumicestone with better health services. For Pumicestone, this means shorter waits and easier access to these vital services. Our on-demand bus service trial will also connect Bribie Island residents to the places they need to go for just 50 cents.

The people of Pumicestone have made it clear that better infrastructure is a priority. We live in a growing region and our current infrastructure is not keeping up with the needs of our community. Every day, residents face long commutes and frustrating traffic bottlenecks. It is time we finally deliver on expanding Bribie Island Road and delivering a new Bribie Island bridge. These projects are not just about easing congestion; they are about getting people home quicker and safer and boosting our local economy. Bribie Island is the heart of our electorate, and we can unlock its full potential as an ecotourism destination, creating jobs and new opportunities for our community.

I also look forward to working with our environmental group BIEPA to protect our endangered loggerhead and green sea turtles. Hardworking turtle tracker volunteers have already identified over 15 nests in the national park this season. I am committed to ensuring we do all we can to protect these beautiful little reptiles while making sure the next generation can enjoy our beaches for years to come.

Pumicestone, like all communities across Queensland, is dealing with the challenge of domestic, family and sexual violence. I am pleased that our Safer Families, Safer Communities plan will introduce GPS trackers for high-risk offenders to deter breaches and protect victims along with safety devices for those at risk. These measures are about ensuring every family can feel safe in their own home and know that their government is standing with them.

I also want to acknowledge the incredible work being done in our community by Mark and Claire from the Good People, who are rescuing women every day from dangerous DV situations across our community. Their dedication to supporting vulnerable women is nothing short of inspiring. I also commend Greg Rollason, the president of Sandstone Point Lions, who has been instrumental in helping women escape these situations by finding them accommodation and ensuring they have the essentials they need to rebuild their lives.

I am proud to represent many wonderful community organisations—too many to name here—that make our community a better place. That is why I am involved with so many, like the Toorbul District Community Association, which fosters strong community connections and addresses local needs, while Bribie Island U3A offers lifelong learning opportunities. From French lessons to oil painting, Bribie Island U3A has it all. I occasionally enjoy dancing along with the members of the rock'n'roll class, the Bribie Rockers. If anyone knows a good Elvis impersonator, please do get in touch! We would love to see Elvis on Bribie.

Voices, our vibrant choral group led by the talented Jenda Jacobs, is spreading the joy of music throughout the community this Christmas time. Jenda's incredible contributions extend to Bribie Island Lions and many other associations, showcasing the spirit of service that defines our region. Our veteran groups are a cornerstone of our community, providing essential support for those who have served. Their dedication ensures that the sacrifices of our service men and women are honoured and remembered, inspiring all of us with their resilience and commitment.

I also want to highlight the remarkable work of Vicki Wood, the President of BPW, Business and Professional Women Moreton Bay. BPW offers personal and professional development opportunities for women, empowering them to increase their confidence and standing in both the workplace and the community. The organisation passionately advocates for women locally, nationally and globally. BPW Moreton Bay is made up of a diverse and dedicated group of women who support one another and volunteer their time and energy to create meaningful change. I have thoroughly enjoyed attending BPW's breakfast networking sessions, which bring together inspiring women committed to making a difference.

As a proud member of the Sandstone Point Lions, I had the privilege of organising the Green Canopy Project this year, a fantastic initiative that brought together Lions members and the wider community to plant trees in Caboolture. It was a rewarding experience that showcased the power of teamwork and community spirit as well as our shared commitment to local environmental action.

Our sporting clubs are another vital part of our community. Pickleball is a new favourite my dad and I have started to play. The Bribie Island Surf Club, established in 1922, is one of the oldest surf lifesaving clubs in Australia. While the original building was lost to fire in 1979, the clubhouse has been looking to upgrade its existing facilities for some time. I am proud to be part of a government that has committed to supporting this club's renovation.

I am especially excited about the upcoming resurfacing of the Bribie Island netball courts, which will provide a safer and more enjoyable environment for players. Netball has always held a special place in my heart, as it was my favourite sport growing up. I played it passionately throughout primary school and well into middle school.

In Beachmere, the Rugby League club will also benefit from our commitment to upgrade their field lighting. This club had to turn players away because playing games at night was too risky without proper lighting. The Bribie Island Movement and Strength Club will also finally be getting a home. They have proudly produced Australian champions in weightlifting and they deserve to have adequate training facilities. By investing in these incredible groups and facilities today, we will ensure that our electorate continues to thrive and inspire younger generations to follow their passion.

There are also specific issues that I am passionate about, given the perspective I bring to this House. One of the most critical areas where we can enable real change is in education. Having relatively recently finished school, I feel qualified to say that education is not preparing students for the real world. While important, testing dominates the school experience and students are missing out on other opportunities to learn. Our teachers are under immense pressure, having to deal with a cluttered curriculum and behaviour management issues. We must look for innovative models, rather than a one-size-fits-all. We need to prepare students to be active, contributing Queenslanders not just in the jobs they might have in the future but in the communities they live in. I will work tirelessly alongside my team to advocate for an education system that prepares young people not just for exams but for life.

One of the dominant issues for generation Z is the prospect of not being able to own a home like generations before us have. House prices have outpaced incomes and it is now almost impossible to buy your own home without the bank of mum and dad. I am no different from many young people in Pumicestone; this dream has been out of reach for me. I am proud to now be in a position to deliver the change young Queenslanders want to see: to unlock the dream of home ownership. We need big, bold solutions to this big challenge. State government will not be able to do it alone, but our LNP team will do more than has been done to date. We will abolish stamp duty for first home builds so that owning a home can be a reality for young people, not just a pipedream.

The people in Pumicestone believed we needed a fresh start for Queensland and they supported the plan put forward by the LNP and Premier David Crisafulli. I am acutely aware that I would not be here today without the support of the LNP. Many people living in the communities that make up Pumicestone voted for change because of the crises we were all experiencing in youth crime, health, housing and cost of living. Our plan for Queensland is focused on practical solutions to turn Queensland around, tackling the cost of living and energy prices, fixing our hospitals and schools, and enshrining consequences for actions within our youth justice system. Once more, we will be the government that builds our state for the years ahead, just like we have in the decades before.

There are many people I need to thank. To my mum and dad: you have been my biggest supporters and without your guidance I would not be where I am today. To the rest of the family: thank you for your patience, support and belief in me. To the honourable member for Glass House, Andrew Powell, and Joy Leishman, the former mayor of Caboolture shire: you gave your time to mentor me to ensure I was ready to take on my responsibilities as the member for Pumicestone. I will forever be grateful for your generosity. Thank you to the member for Bonney, our youth minister, for your guidance and for first giving me this crazy but brilliant idea to run for parliament. To my entire campaign team, who spent hours roadsiding, doorknocking, phone canvassing, putting up signs and standing at the pre-poll: I could not have done this without you and will forever be grateful.

I will be a strong voice for my community and will represent their concerns with integrity, compassion and unwavering commitment, ensuring that every voice is heard and every issue is addressed with the care and urgency it deserves. I thank my other colleagues in parliament for their support during our campaign and wish them all of the success for the years ahead. I would also like to thank the previous members for Pumicestone of all political colours. I have only just started but know that this job requires everything of a person, so for your service I place my thanks and that of our electorate on the record. As I said at the beginning, I come to this place with a different perspective. I also come energised and looking to a long and bright future for Queensland. I am honoured to help build that future here in this House.