




Speech By
Hon. Craig Crawford

MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER

Record of Proceedings, 18 April 2024

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Gilmore, MR TJG, OAM

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (9.47 am): I want to make a brief contribution to this condolence motion. Tom Gilmore was the mayor of Mareeba, which encompasses part of the Barron River electorate, and the area around Kuranda and Speewah is an area we both had in common. I knew Tom from when I entered parliament in 2015 through to when he retired as mayor. I always found him to be an absolute gentleman in the way he conducted business. He was from a different side of politics to me. Obviously he was very hardcore National Party, but I always remember that he was the same age as my father. Sometimes Tom and I would have very similar conversations as my father is also very hardcore National Party. Members can imagine what some of those were like! It felt like being around the Christmas dinner table.

Tom was passionate about Mareeba. He fought for Mareeba all the time. I forget the number of times that Tom has given me the lesson about the strategic importance of the Mareeba Airport and why the US and allied military forces chose that location for strategic bomber and fighter airstrips. He saw that airport as not being utilised to its fullest in respect of international trade and other things.

Roads were his other thing. The member for Warrego talked about going up the hill. I forget how many times Tom told me about why the Kuranda Range needed to be upgraded. He certainly led that charge all the way, and he encouraged other mayors to do so as well. I remember him saying to me one day, 'Craig, if there's one thing I need to do before I die, I need to get that road to Chillagoe sealed.' I know there has been work done out there, but I think I am going to have to go for a drive out there and see how he went because I am not quite sure we made it. Maybe the Minister for Transport and Main Roads can fill that in. To his family and friends: vale, Tom. We have definitely lost a giant of Far North Queensland politics.