




Speech By
Joan Pease

MEMBER FOR LYTTON

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENTS

National Volunteer Week; Lytton Electorate

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (3.04 pm): Today I want to speak about Volunteer Week, and I also want to acknowledge the great work of all of our frontline workers, our paramedics and our doctors in our hospitals who are doing a great job. I particularly want to acknowledge the speech made earlier today by the member for Thuringowa, who gave a very good overview of what it is actually like to be a paramedic. Rather than constantly bashing them, which is what the LNP does, we heard firsthand what it is like. I want to take a moment to acknowledge all of the volunteers across Queensland, particularly in my electorate.

We have a great weekend ahead. Tomorrow I am hosting the Volunteers in Policing with our local police officers. In our electorate we have lots of organisations, such as Vinnies, that do volunteer work. On Sunday the Bayside Community Fund, which is another organisation that supports all volunteers in the area, is hosting Pups in the Park. It will be a great opportunity for people to come down from 10 o'clock on Sunday to Elanora Park to watch some dogs dancing. You name it, dogs can do just about anything!

Today I want to acknowledge that we live in a beautiful place. It is vibrant, diverse and inclusive. It is tolerant of differences; it is respectful and kind hearted. The conscious way we as humans interact with one another—the thoughts that enter our minds, the emotions that pour from our hearts—are all thoughts and emotions that ultimately control the words that knowingly come out of our mouths, and words are extremely important. They express our consciousness. One of the most important words in our language is 'sorry.' 'Sorry' can mean sympathy or compassion for someone's misfortune. 'Sorry' can also mean a deep regret. In light of National Sorry Day coming up on the weekend, I would like to say sorry. It takes courage and leadership to say the word 'sorry'. It also takes courage and leadership to forgive.

When our fellow Queenslander Kevin Rudd said sorry in federal parliament all those years ago, it was an important step on the path of reconciliation for all Australians. I would suggest that the vast majority of Australians are incredibly regretful for what happened to our Indigenous communities over many shameful decades. The vast majority of Australians feel a deep sense of compassion for the tens of thousands of victims of our stolen generations, and we are deeply sorry. We remember, we acknowledge and we deeply regret the disgraceful mistreatment of First Nations children who were forcibly removed from their mothers' arms, their family homes and their communities. That policy can never be justified. It was beyond cruel. It was evil. I am truly, deeply sorry. Tomorrow morning I will be joining with baysiders and members of Quandamooka country as we come together on this important day to pay our respects and say sorry.