




Speech By
Jonty Bush

MEMBER FOR COOPER

Record of Proceedings, 21 March 2024

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Greenwood, Hon. JW, QC

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (9.52 am): I rise also to make a brief contribution to the condolence motion for the Hon. John Greenwood RFD, QC, who served as the member for Ashgrove for nine years from 1974 as a member of the Liberal Party. My electorate of Cooper, formerly known as Ashgrove, has benefited from some really strong representatives in parliament. Reading through John's speeches in preparation for this speech, I saw that he had some really strong, clear and firm views about things that mattered to him.

Others have spoken about John's extraordinary accomplishments. I am not inclined to repeat those. What I would like to do is comment on the very real difficulty that I feel in speaking about a gentleman I never had the opportunity to meet but whose life has collided with mine through this shared obligation, responsibility and privilege to uphold the rights and interests of the constituents of Ashgrove who are now the constituents of Cooper.

I did want to get a sense of who John Greenwood was and so I reached out to his family. I thank his son, Nigel, for being very generous in sharing his stories with me. I really appreciate that. I certainly will not repeat them all, but I will say that I came away with a very strong impression of a man who was very principled, who had courage and was very devoted to his family and his community and, importantly, had a healthy dose of integrity.

John entered parliament through a sense of civic duty and purpose, something that was imbued in him as a youngster and developed further through his national service. He came into this place as a lawyer and a person who already had a really impressive human rights resume. John was instrumental in putting an end to oil and gas drilling on the Great Barrier Reef and was a real humanitarian and friend to the Solomon Islands. Importantly, his first priority was to work across the political divide to cultivate relationships and to represent the people of Ashgrove with honour and integrity.

I do want to particularly acknowledge John's role in standing up for the women in Queensland. As the Deputy Premier illustrated in his example, when John was asked along with his caucus colleagues to support the government of the time in further criminalising abortion in Queensland and essentially restricting access to legal terminations of pregnancy for women, he was one of a very small number of the caucus who stood up and spoke against that. I understand he may be one of the only cabinet ministers at the time to speak up against that in what was a conservative government. I think we could all relate to the political pressures that that would place on somebody. I do understand that it may have cost him that cabinet position. He did speak up for the women of Queensland amidst that pressure.

When we all reflect on what people might say about us in this place in our condolence motions—hopefully not too soon—we would all like to be remembered as a person who stood by our values, who stood up for our community, who did the right thing by Queenslanders and who had conviction and courage. I certainly hope people say that about me. I hope the family really come away from today with that very strong and shared sentiment from across the chamber.

On behalf of the constituents of Ashgrove, who are now the constituents of Cooper, I pass on my condolences to John's family: to his wife, Barbara, as well as to Nigel and Kate. Our thanks also go to his family. All of us here know it takes really strong family support to help us do the things we do in here and I know they were a huge part of his success. I acknowledge that for them all. Also, I have had the pleasure of knowing Kate through her work in ATSILS and Nigel is an esteemed human rights warrior himself, so obviously the apple did not fall very far from the tree in that regard. On behalf of our Ashgrove community, please accept our deepest condolences and the gratitude for John's service. Vale, John Ward Greenwood.