




Speech By
Joseph Kelly

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

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MOTION

Olympic and Paralympic Games

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (4.41 pm): I would like to place on record my very strong support for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. You might have heard of ‘go for gold’, but I am ‘Joe for gold’. I wear these Olympics as an absolute badge of pride and every single Queenslander should bear them as a badge of pride. I am pretty good at darts. I probably should not boast, but I reckon I could probably take on most people in this House. We all know that I am never going to win an Olympic medal in any sport, but I tell members this: I will wear as a badge of pride the fact that our state has managed to get the Olympics. Our state is absolutely punching above its weight. The IOC and the world has shown confidence in us to deliver these games and we should show that confidence in ourselves.

I spent my childhood in Charters Towers, Magnetic Island and Townsville. I spent a fair bit of that time watching cricket coming from—where else—the Gabba. I remember how proud we were to have such amazing sport in our state. We did not sit around lamenting the fact it was not in Charters Towers; we just loved the fact it was here in Queensland. I am old enough to remember when State of Origin kicked off and I remember how quickly it grew. We did not sit around in Townsville and Magnetic Island saying, ‘Why isn’t that here in Townsville?’ We sat around saying, ‘Isn’t it fantastic to be a Queenslander?’ That is exactly what we said. This pedalling of bush versus city is an absolute nonsense. The proposition being put forward in this motion represents a false dichotomy. The Olympics and the Paralympics—or something else; we can have it all, because we are Queenslanders.

Let us examine the Olympic and Paralympic Games versus regional Queensland. I am proud to be part of a government that has prioritised regional Queensland. In the 2023-24 state budget, 65.5 per cent of capital investment was for outside of Brisbane—\$13.3 billion in the financial year. Nearly twice the amount that this motion notes is being spent on the Olympics and Paralympics over the next 10 years has been allocated to regional Queensland for one year. It is twice in one year what we are spending in 10 years. This should probably make me extremely cranky as a Brisbane MP, but, in fact, it makes me extremely proud that I am part of a government that fundamentally understands that when any part of Queensland succeeds, we all succeed. We are proud to put Queenslanders first in this state.

Let us think about those regional investments: CopperString, Works for Queensland—how many jobs has that created—the Townsville stadium, the Cairns Convention Centre, cluster fencing, Indigenous land and sea rangers. Let us not forget the schools, the hospitals, the police, fire, and ambulance stations, the social housing and the boat ramps. Let us not forget the boat ramps! Let us not forget that the members for Hill, Traeger and Hinchinbrook will stand outside those shiny new hospitals, schools and police stations to get their photos taken and take credit for standing up for their communities. But who funded them? It was the Miles Labor government. This list could go on and on.

The Premier today outlined in his ministerial statement the significant development of industry going on in Gladstone. It is not just happening there; it is happening in Mackay, it is happening in Townsville and it is happening in Cairns. It is happening right around this great state. We have been doing this way before we won the Olympic and Paralympic Games, and we are not going to stop because we have the games.

This false dichotomy—sadly—is not just being pedalled by the KAP; it is also being pedalled by the Greens. Lots of people in many areas say that we should not spend money on the Gabba—if we do go down that path—but instead should spend that money on hospitals. Once again, the amount of money that was proposed to be spent on the Gabba is absolutely dwarfed by what we spend on health in one single year. We have spent \$25 billion this year on health to rebuild hospitals like the PA Hospital and the QEII Hospital—\$25 billion is 10 times what we were proposing to spend on the Gabba over 10 years and it will be spent in one year. That is incredible. Anybody who makes this argument is pedalling a false dichotomy. We are great economic managers; we have the capability to do this. This will be massively beneficial to all Queenslanders. If we get behind this together, all Queenslanders will be there when the curtain rises to celebrate the Olympics.

(Time expired)