



Speech By  
**Hon. Leanne Enoch**


**MEMBER FOR ALGESTER**

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Record of Proceedings, 22 August 2024

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Pitt, Hon. C; Thornton, Dr M, AM; Veterans**

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts) (10.27 am): Mr Speaker, I acknowledge your statement today and wish you all the very best. I know that your family and my family are very proud of all of your achievements and I know that whatever you do next will receive that same pride.

I also acknowledge Merle Thornton. I had the great privilege of meeting Merle and her daughter, Sigrid, a couple of years ago. Merle fought for equal opportunities for women and for women's rights—something that we should continue to fight for every day.

Today Queensland is home to the largest population of veterans in Australia and the Miles government is proud to support our veterans with a range of funding for programs delivered through the Queensland Veterans' Council, ex-service organisations, community organisations and local authorities. At the centre of the Miles government's commitment to veterans in Queensland is the development of our new Veterans' Strategy, announced by the assistant minister at the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide. This will guide our government's approach to veterans and I am very proud that it is our Labor government that in 2020 first established the Queensland Office for Veterans. To build on this commitment to Queensland's veterans, we recently announced the third round of our government's Queensland Remembers grants program, providing \$1.5 million for 28 infrastructure and memorial projects across the state for veterans and their families. The fourth round of this grants program is open now to eligible organisations that provide service and support for Queensland veterans and their families.

In total, the Queensland government has committed \$5.9 million over four years to the Queensland Remembers Grants Program. This year the government will also provide approximately \$1.7 million in grants to organisations that support the welfare of veterans and their dependents in Queensland through the Anzac Day Trust Fund, which is administered by the Queensland Veterans' Council. In this year's state budget, our new Premier, Steven Miles, and our government provided \$4.9 million over the next four years and then \$1.2 million per annum ongoing to the Queensland Veterans' Council. This funding will support the council to continue its important work in advising the government on veterans' issues, managing the state's premier war memorial, Anzac Square in Brisbane, and administering the Anzac Day Trust Fund.

As the date for the final report of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide comes closer, the Miles government stands committed to a careful review of the report's recommendations and the role that state governments can play in supporting veterans. The Miles government remains committed to acknowledging and honouring the service and sacrifice of our veterans and supporting those veterans who choose to make Queensland their home.