



Speech By  
**Margaret Nightingale**


**MEMBER FOR INALA**

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## ADJOURNMENT

### Inala Electorate, Fall of Saigon Commemoration

 **Ms NIGHTINGALE** (Inala—ALP) (10.42 pm): On 30 April, I had the honour of attending an important event in my community of Inala. On that day, we came together with solemn hearts to observe a day of mourning. On 30 April 1975, the city of Saigon fell into the hands of communist Vietnamese forces. Almost half a century later, that day continues to leave marks on our hearts and our minds.

We gathered at Freedom Place in Inala, a memorial erected to commemorate those who lost their lives as they fled Vietnam on boats to find refuge in countries like Australia. I thank Dr Bui, the President of the Vietnamese Community in Australia, Queensland Chapter, which is the peak organisation representing the Vietnamese community in Inala and across the state, and the members of the committee who supported him in organising the event. Testament to the importance of this day was that the event was attended by many dignitaries, including members of the Australian Defence Force and members of the Queensland police force, who together paid tribute to the countless individuals who have suffered and perished in the pursuit of freedom, justice and independence for Vietnam.

An estimated 224,000 South Vietnamese soldiers lost their lives, alongside 603,000 who were wounded. That is on top of the 415,000 South Vietnamese civilians who also died and as many as over one million who were wounded. A further 521 Australians died as a result of service in the Vietnam War, fighting for freedom and democracy. As the member for Inala, I am driven by a desire for our society to be inclusive and one where diversity is celebrated and the voices of all citizens are heard and respected. That is a democracy I value every day. Through the struggles against communism, the Vietnamese people have endured unimaginable hardships with remarkable resilience and courage.

I acknowledge that many of my constituents are feeling the impacts of the loss. My understanding of this was strengthened through the book written by Father Le. He tells of his journey through the communist concentration camps and to eventual freedom, and he speaks with hope. I was inspired by the hope he spoke of and I continue to be inspired by his demonstrated strength and community spirit, which is mirrored by the Vietnamese people who reside in my electorate. Here in this place, I remember those who have given so much to fight for this freedom and pledge that we will keep fighting for human rights in their name and in their honour.