




Speech By
Nigel Hutton

MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

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MAIDEN SPEECH

 **Mr HUTTON** (Keppel—LNP) (4.02 pm): When I reflect on 14 years of teaching, the first day each year I had butterflies in my belly and I took that as a sign that it was going to be a good year and it was a chance that I was still both excited and nervous to do well. Today I have those same feelings, so I take that to mean that I am both excited and nervous to do well. I offer my thanks to my colleagues who honour me with their presence here today to hear my maiden speech. I am truly humbled.

The thunderous chords rose in unison as from the heavens as the grey light glistened through the hundreds of stained glass windows of the abbey. The silence was broken by the shuffle of hundreds of feet as the congregation of kings, of princes, of politics, of business and of citizens stood proudly across the glistening floors while a lady entered the Great West Door. She traversed the nave and walked, as hundreds of monarchs had before her, to the chorus of *God Save the Queen* echoing throughout the halls of Westminster Abbey. I did on that day, as so many had before, but see her passing by, and I remember my reflections from that day. I saw before me a dedicated servant of people, a leader in practice not words of charity, and a keeper of the flame of hope. It would be quite poetic to linger on the day, and perhaps a good yarn to say that this day among many of a lifetime of amazing days, led to my own desire to be of service, to give charity and to believe in hope. Yet, as so often is the case of post hoc ergo propter hoc, it would be a fallacy, for I am the living legacy of four grandparents, two wonderfully devoted parents, shared with four siblings and someone whose life story continues to be written with the latest chapters drawn with the shared hand of my beloved wife and our two beautiful daughters.

Australian psychologist Andrew Fuller states that to create a community that serves, a community that gives, we must surround our community with the service of others and the opportunity to serve. I am forever grateful for the legacy of service that I have been surrounded by in my life.

My grandfathers both offered their services to their community—one as a soldier, a proud Lion, a Rotarian and a midnight removalist for women in need. The other served through his committed participation in the Freemasons and their charity work. My grandmother served on the Royal Children's Hospital Auxiliary and the St James Parish Council, the Mothers' Union, the church choir, the Legacy Widows and in the Endeavour op shop. Witnessing these acts of service, of charity and of hope undoubtedly played a role in raising me to be the man I am today.

Yet, I sit on the shoulders of further giants still. My mum and my dad—a nurse and a fireman, 45 years each—raised five kids and opened their homes to many, many more as foster carers, including my adopted sister without whom our family would never have been complete. We have two teachers, an independent businesswoman, a machinist who volunteers as a rural firefighter, and a devoted social worker who make up the next generation of our family and, as you can hear, we each carry service, charity and hope. It is this legacy of service, charity and hope which my wife and I seek to foster in our community so that, as our village raises its young, our children will share in its effect. As a Lion, a former

local government councillor and a schoolteacher, I have borne witness every day to the amazing acts of service, of charity and hope that the volunteers in my electorate of Keppel give—the value immeasurable, the effort irreplaceable and the outcome a very special place that we can share and get to call home.

Keppel is an electorate of aspirational Queenslanders who are dedicated to working hard and seek the solace of the bush, the joy of the pristine Keppel Bay and the sanctuary of the urban centre to balance their lives. In all honesty, we prefer the light touch of government to work with us to achieve our aspirations rather than a firm hand of government which works to guide our aspirations. My family, like many in Keppel, believe that, as each generation succeeds, the next should benefit from our efforts and that the legacy we leave is stronger and resilient. We value the natural beauty of both the country and the worked soils which generate our food, our resources and our wealth. We work hard and know that our efforts build the prosperity of our great state, yet there are times when we feel that our voices, the voices of the regions, have been lost in the speed and the intensity and the pressure of the state's capital over the last 10 years.

I intend to serve my community of Keppel and all Central Queenslanders by giving voice to their dreams, their aspirations and also their fears, for government is ultimately about people. Over the 414 days of the campaign for Keppel, I heard every day from people who had hopes, dreams and fears, and I offer my sincere thanks to each and every one of them for their willingness to share their stories—stories like that of Jan, a strong, amazingly independent woman who has given a lifetime of service to our community, only to surrender her private health insurance in retirement to meet cost-of-living pressures and now finds her life forever changed. Jan has waited years for life-changing surgery for her knee and hip, and her quality of life has undoubtedly diminished throughout this wait. Jan's changed circumstances remind me every day of the cost of under-resourcing and the heavy price that has been paid by Queenslanders. For Jan, I will fight for better health services.

For Mary of Emu Park, whose life changed forever when, after raising her family, she found herself separated, alone and unable to afford a home in her community, I will fight for a place to call home. Bill of Norman Gardens, who confessed that he did not see himself as a victim of crime as his house had not been broken into yet—but he found that his new security system had caught six occasions on which his house had been cased and now he lives in fear—deserves to feel safe in his home, and for him I will fight for safety in our communities.

Thomo, who left school and went straight out West to work in the mines, who drives in and out on a seven-day roster and who generates the wealth of our state and supports so many of our regional communities, deserves to feel proud of the work that he and so many more do, and I will fight for a future for them. For Luke and Roxanne, who have experienced both wonder and pain on their journey to develop a wedding venue, an agricultural farm and a homestay, I will fight to support the right for small and family businesses to succeed and make sure that government services nurture investment and limit regulation.

These are the voices of the people of Central Queensland that my wonderful campaign team of Bruce Young, Vicki Bastin-Byrne, Neil McDonnell, Tim Reagan, Robyn Bauer, Leyland, Nathan and Ben from the secretariat and all of our volunteers thought of each and every day. I thank my amazing team for their effort and honour their service. To my 'Team CQ' colleagues—the members for Rockhampton and Mirani: I am so proud to serve alongside these fighters for CQ and excited that our shared journey continues. I cannot wait to do brilliant things with you both. To the Hon. Michelle Landry MP, the Hon. Senator Matt Canavan and their amazing staff, who provided encouragement and support and volunteered their knowledge, their experience and their weekends: thank you.

I will work every day in our team in CQ to make sure that the voices of Keppel are heard, that we in the regions get our fair share and that the fresh start we deserve provides vision and delivers a bright future for the people of Keppel, because we all deserve a life of choice, not chance. To this end, I wish to highlight the special role played by our teachers everywhere—teachers who lift up students, who foster self-belief and who encourage a lifelong love of learning. I was privileged in my childhood to have brilliant teachers. I was honoured to spend over a decade teaching alongside some of the finest teachers in our state, including my tremendous former colleagues at Yeppoon State High School and the devoted teachers of Yeppoon State School. I will work every day to ensure the teachers and students of our state have learning environments that are safe and that support the achievement of classes, because we all deserve a life of choice, not chance.

I take a final moment to thank my beautiful wife, Tanya; our two girls; my parents, Joanne and Grantly; my siblings—my secret weapons—Angela and Craig; my dear friend Trevor; Di; my extended family; and my wonderful friends. We could not have achieved this outcome in Keppel without you. I am

a worker from a family of workers, and I could never have done it without the support of my friends or the generous supporters of our campaign for Keppel. To the Premier, the Deputy Premier, the Minister for Finance, the Minister for Transport, the member for Callide and the entire frontbench team: thank you for coming to CQ and hearing the voices of our region again and again. We wanted to be heard and, with you, we were.

A final thank you to the people of Keppel. You have placed your faith in me and I will remember each and every day what a privilege this is. I am grateful to each and every one of you for voting for a fresh start for Queensland.