




Speech By
Rebecca Young

MEMBER FOR REDLANDS

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MAIDEN SPEECH

 **Mrs YOUNG** (Redlands—LNP) (9.33 pm): Today I rise deeply honoured and humbled to serve the people of the Redlands as their newly elected member of parliament. This role is not just a privilege; it is an immense responsibility. The trust and faith that the people of the Redlands have placed in me will inspire me every day to work harder, aim higher and achieve more. The Redlands is more than just where I live; it is where my story began. It is where my parents taught me the importance of hard work, care for my community and compassion for others. It is where I attended school, played sport, raised my family, bought my first home and successfully started a business. I stand here as a proud daughter of the Redlands, ready to serve the community that has given me so much.

Firstly, I wish to express my deepest gratitude to the Premier of Queensland and member for Broadwater, the Hon. David Crisafulli. His leadership and commitment to the LNP's Right Plan for Queensland have been nothing short of inspiring. His vision for a better Queensland is not about politics; it is about people. It is about families like mine, businesses like those in our community and every Queenslanders who deserves to thrive. Former prime minister John Howard once said—

Truth is absolute, truth is supreme, truth is never disposable in national political life.

Those words resonate deeply with me because they remind us that leadership is not about shortcuts or spin. It is about being honest, acting with integrity and delivering on your promises. Premier Crisafulli embodies this sentiment and I am inspired to follow his example. It is with this same sense of purpose that I step into my role as Assistant Minister to the Deputy Premier and Assistant Minister for Planning, Housing and Better Regulation. This is an opportunity I do not take for granted. Premier, I will work hard to ensure that your confidence in me is honoured. I am grateful for the trust you have placed in me to serve the Redlands.

After receiving the LNP local membership's endorsement to represent them as their candidate for the Redlands in 2022, this moment has been two years in the making. It has been a two-year journey of growth, challenges and resilience. It has been a transformative experience filled with long and full days and unwavering determination.

I would not be standing here today without the love and support of my husband, Justin. Justin, you are my partner in every sense of the word. Your belief in me has been my greatest source of strength. Together we have proven that 'whatever it takes' is possible. Every single day you have been there as my cheerleader, my adviser and my anchor. Together we have built a life in the Redlands that is rooted in the community, family and service. I cannot thank you enough for standing by my side through every sacrifice and every challenge. Your love and commitment to our family and our community inspire me to be the best version of myself.

To our children, Jaxson, Georgia-Grace, Chelsea and Harland: you are the reason I strive every single day to be better and to do better. I know that our family has never been traditional and at times life's challenges have meant we have had to work harder to overcome adversity or endure moments

when we could not be together in one place, but through it all my love for each of you has been unshakeable. You are, and you always will be, my greatest motivation. Everything Dad and I have done—every late night, every decision and every sacrifice—has been with you in mind. My hope is that the example we have set for you inspires you to dream big, follow your passions and contribute to the world with kindness and compassion. Each of you has a unique spark and I have no doubt you will make it a better place in your own extraordinary ways. Always know how proud we are of you and how deeply you are all loved.

To my parents, who instilled in me the values of service and dedication while raising me in the Redlands community: thank you for being my first role models. Your example continues to guide me as I strive to serve the Redlands with integrity and heart. The lessons you taught me about hard work, humility and community service are the foundations of everything that I do. This moment is as much yours as it is mine. Those values are deeply rooted in my upbringing and are the same principles I will bring to this role.

From my years at Victoria Point State School, where I learned to live the motto of ‘Always our best’, to Ormiston College, where I was encouraged to ‘seek to achieve’, the Redlands community has been instrumental in shaping who I am today. It instilled in me the value of hard work, the importance of family and the enduring power of resilience. A decade ago, that foundation gave me the courage to take a leap of faith, as so many Queenslanders do, and start my own international freight business from my home in Victoria Point. What began as an idea fuelled by determination has grown into an enterprise that creates jobs, contributes to the local economy and is now located in the fastest growing commercial area in the Redlands, the Redlands Business Park.

That journey taught me more than the intricacies of running a business; it revealed the profound and lasting impact small businesses have on the very fabric of our community. Small businesses are not just economic engines; they are the heart of our neighbourhoods. They sponsor our children’s sporting teams, ensuring our local clubs thrive, and give young athletes the chance to play, compete and grow. They are the backbones of our chambers of commerce, driving collaboration and innovation whilst advocating for growth and opportunity.

Small businesses take on essential roles in our community from providing the daily service we rely on to owning and managing commercial properties that become gathering points for friends, families and neighbours. They create spaces where ideas flourish, connections are made and lives are improved. Their contributions go far beyond financial success. They make our communities livable and vibrant. From the corner cafe that hosts weekend conversations to the tradespeople who ensure our homes are functional and safe, small businesses enrich our daily lives in countless ways. This experience has solidified my understanding of the importance of small businesses as the backbone of our community and the key to Redlands’ future.

Redlands is a place of extraordinary beauty and potential. It is a place where families thrive, businesses grow and nature is cherished. From the island lifestyle of southern Moreton Bay to the vibrant suburbs of Thornlands, Victoria Point and Redland Bay, Redlands is a community unlike any other. Our history as the salad bowl of South-East Queensland reflects the resilience and the innovation of our people. Today, the same spirit drives us forward but Redlands is also a community facing challenges. During my campaign, I was privileged to sit with Redlanders from all walks of life and hear their stories, stories that have shaped my purpose and commitment to serve my community with bravery and action.

I sat at the dining room table of Adam and Natalie in Thornlands over 14 months ago now as they shared how youth crime made them feel trapped in their home. I helped Sam and her six children move from a freezing tent in Victoria Point into a home across the road from a school where her kids could continue their education and she could return to work. For the first time in months, she could sleep peacefully knowing her children were under a safe, secure roof.

I listened to Melissa, a newlywed and small business owner in Victoria Point, who saw her livelihood threatened when her car was stolen not once but twice in one week. I met Sarah, who watched her husband almost die on the floor of their family home after he fell through a glass window. She could not get an ambulance when he needed it most. I stood with Sonu, the owner of our local FoodWorks, who endured four break-ins this year, losing not only \$70,000 in stock but also his peace of mind. I supported Chris and his wife, Jodie—he simply went to Woolies on a Wednesday to buy a cooked chook and ended up fighting for his life after being stabbed by a youth offender.

These are not just stories; they are urgent reminders of the challenges our community faces and the action Redlands need and deserve. They represent the struggles, fears and hopes of real people—our neighbours, friends and families—who deserve better. They deserve solutions. They deserve to feel supported and safe in their own community.

Whether I was standing on someone's doorstep, answering a call, chatting in a shopping centre or sharing a conversation over a coffee at my local cafe, I heard these stories firsthand. The raw honesty and emotion behind each experience left a lasting mark on me. These moments were not just conversations; they were calls for action. They were calls for help. They were cries for change and a powerful affirmation that Redlands is ready for a fresh start. Every interaction reminded me of why I stepped forward to listen, to understand and to fight for the community that had been calling out for action. It is these stories that have guided my vision and priorities for Redlands.

To support and guide our youth, I am proud to back the Top Blokes program, helping young people build resilience and respect while diverting them away from a path of crime. To preserve the natural beauty that defines Redlands we will deliver a conservation management plan on Coochiemudlo Island, safeguarding our environment for future generations. We will address infrastructure challenges by getting Cleveland-Redland Bay Road back on track and finally delivering the long-awaited construction of a multilevel car park at Weinam Creek.

For our island residents, we will provide parking relief through a 50 per cent subsidy on vehicle barge travel and free memberships to Bay Islands Car Share. We will also keep the 50-cent ferry fare, ensuring affordable and accessible transport for everyone. To empower our local workforce, we will establish a Russell Island training centre of excellence, boasting training opportunities and supporting our economy. We are committing \$12 million to relocate the RSPCA Wildlife Hospital to Redlands, ensuring our treasured wildlife receives the care it deserves while creating opportunities for training, education and jobs—resources Redlands has long needed.

Each of these commitments reflects the voices and the needs of our community, needs I heard loud and clear during my campaign. These are not just plans on paper; they are steps forward to build a Redlands that we can all be proud to call our home, where everyone can thrive and where our shared future is bright, sustainable and inclusive.

I know that the people of Redlands want more than just promises; they want action. They want someone who will listen, stand up for them and fight tirelessly for positive change. That is why I am here. I am here to provide the brave voice and stability that our community needs and deserves. My opportunity to serve exists because the people of Redlands wanted a fresh start. They wanted someone who would do more than just announce plan after plan or review after review. They wanted a representative who will deliver real outcomes and meaningful change in response to their needs.

I will never stop listening. I will work with an open door, an open mind and a relentless drive to champion solutions that will truly make a difference in people's lives. My role is not just to serve but to empower. Together, we will build a community where families feel supported, businesses thrive and everyone feels safe and valued. Redlands deserves nothing less, and I will not rest until we achieve it.

As I reflect on the journey that brought me here, I know I would not be standing in this chamber today without the unwavering support of so many people. My maiden speech would not be complete without acknowledging and thanking those who walked alongside me every step of the way. Firstly, a special thankyou to my mum, Karen. Mum, I never imagined you would be out there wearing a Rebecca Young shirt, waving on the side of the road and handing out how-to-vote cards but there you were—devoted, reliable and someone I have always looked up to. You have shown me what it means to be committed to family and community. Your strength and encouragement throughout this journey meant the world to me and I could not have done it without you.

To my incredible 'roadsiders' who brought so much energy to this campaign—every morning, rain, hail or shine, you were there. To my mother-in-law, Bev, Ben, Gloria, Fred and my Auntie Rose: you made those early mornings brighter and more meaningful. Fred, with your trusty clicker we shared the thrill of every wave from passing cars, each one a small but powerful sign of support from the community. I think our record was 270 in just one hour! Your enthusiasm and dedication brought joy to those mornings and kept my spirits high.

To my best friends, Kim and Mandy, and your families: thank you for standing by me every step of the way. Kim, who would have thought you would find yourself talking politics with your school friends, your sport friends and even your extended family. Watching your new-found love for democracy has been an absolute joy. For the past 13 years, you have been my loyal friends. You have supported me through thick and thin, even when I have roped you into some of my craziest ideas, and I love that our husbands tried to keep us apart. Your friendship means everything to me and I am endlessly grateful. To Natalie and Yolande, the two incredible women who stood beside me alongside our new Premier on day one: your friendship and support were invaluable. In those early days, your Friday night FaceTimes kept me grounded. Your companionship made this journey easier, and I am so thankful to have shared this experience with you.

To the Young LNP: you are a force to be reckoned with. On 15 April 2023 we held my very first campaign roadside—a defining moment that made it clear the LNP had arrived in the Redlands. You turned out in incredible numbers, showcasing your energy, enthusiasm and commitment to the cause. That event set the tone for a campaign fuelled by passion and teamwork.

A special mention goes to the outstanding leadership of the Young LNP, guided by four remarkable presidents over the past two years—Darcy, Kate, Alex and now Helen. Each of you has left a lasting legacy and your leadership has set a high standard for those who follow. Of course, I cannot mention the Young LNP without giving a special shout-out to Declan. Declan, you made sure I always had a great photograph. I hope that by thanking you tonight in my first speech I have secured good photographs for years to come.

It may seem unusual to acknowledge a member from another electorate in this speech, but I would like to honour the late Bob Harper, a former member for Mount Ommaney. Although I never had the privilege of meeting Bob, his influence on Redland City politics over nearly two decades cannot be overstated. Bob's unwavering dedication to supporting candidates, sharing his expertise and mentoring professional campaigners helped shape the political landscape in the Redlands. Without his efforts, our city may still be in the hands of the Labor government at every level of government. To Bob's family, especially his wife, Rhonda, I extend my deepest gratitude. Without Bob's contributions, I may not be standing here today.

Finally, I turn to my incredible campaign team. To former member for Redlands, Matt McEachan, who is in the gallery tonight: your ongoing commitment to our community goes far beyond the call of duty. Matt, you believed in me from day one. You have become a mentor and a friend and I thank you. To campaign manager, Shane Goodwin, who, alongside Matt, has trained in the art of local campaigning by Bob Harper: your guidance was invaluable. Ange Awabdy, Grant McCoy and Kristian Marlow: your tireless dedication, often on an hourly basis, carried us through this 19-month journey. Justin and I are deeply grateful for your unwavering support, which made every challenge lighter and every victory sweeter.

As I close my first speech, I am filled with a profound sense of purpose and pride. To be part of the 2024 cohort is truly humbling. My new colleagues are not just representatives; they are champions of their communities, each bringing a unique voice and perspective to the Queensland puzzle. Together, I know we will deliver the fresh start Queenslanders have been calling for. For Redland City, I am especially optimistic about what lies ahead. With Henry, Amanda and Russell all working beside me as a united front, I am confident that our community's future is bright. This is not just a vision; it is a promise—a promise to work tirelessly for the betterment of the Redlands and to always put our community first.

As I close, I want to reaffirm my gratitude to everyone who has walked this journey with me—my family, my friends, my campaign team and, most importantly, the people of Redlands. Redlands, your trust inspires me every single day. This is only the beginning and I am ready to work hard to listen and deliver for our community. Thank you.

Government members: Hear, hear!