




Speech By
Hon. Scott Stewart

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Home Ownership, Palm Island

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources and Critical Minerals) (2.58 pm): It is hard to put into words the significance of an announcement I made on Palm Island last week. The Miles government will ensure that people on Palm Island will be able to own their own home in the future. We are taking the first step towards achieving this goal by championing a community-led home ownership scheme on Palm Island. As part of the proposed scheme, 300 social homes owned by the council will be made available for residents to buy over the next 10 years.

I want to thank Palm Island Aboriginal shire councillor Alf Lacey, who called a town meeting so both of us could speak directly to the community about this. There was huge emotion attached to this announcement, as I am sure everyone in this House can appreciate. I have been working with the council and different mayors and CEOs on this for a number of years, so we were all incredibly proud to get this done.

This is an important first step which will give people on Palm Island the chance to own their own home. We will continue to work directly with the council and the broader community to ensure we make this happen. Home ownership gives people pride of place in where they live, and that is why this is so important. Every Queenslanders deserves the chance to own their own home. As a government, we will work in partnership with the community and the council on the scheme, identifying legislative barriers and considering options to address them to ensure the scheme will be sustainable for home owners and, of course, the council.

The emotion from everyone on Palm last week said it all about how much it meant to people. I had people of all ages a little bit emotional—one or two in tears—about what this means to them. I will quote what Mayor Alf Lacey said because he was over the moon. He told ABC Radio last week—

It's certainly quite exciting because it now leaves a legacy for the new generation of this community and a lot of our First Nations communities in Australia to aspire to owning their own home.

I know that for Alf Lacey and the Palm Island community, which I am proud to represent as both the local member and the ministerial champion, this is probably an understatement of the importance of this announcement. There has been blood, sweat and tears put in by so many people to get to this point and I am thrilled for the amazing community of Palm Island. Let's contrast that with what the LNP opposition leader promised the people of Palm Island on his last visit to that beautiful place: a copy of the family's recipe for date slice. The difference is chalk and cheese.