




Speech By
Wendy Bourne

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH WEST

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MAIDEN SPEECH

 **Ms BOURNE** (Ipswich West—ALP) (3.41 pm): I would like to begin by acknowledging the traditional custodians of this land on which we meet and their elders past and present. I also want to acknowledge the Yagara and Ugarapul people who are the custodians of the land and waters in Ipswich West. I pay respects to the wonderful elders who have shared their wisdom, insight and good humour with me.

I particularly think of Aunty Vera Short, who has lived in Ipswich for more than 50 years and whose work at the Leichhardt One Mile Community Centre has helped so many people across this region. I want to take this opportunity to thank the outgoing member for Ipswich West, Mr Darren Zanow. I wish him all the very best as he faces his significant health challenges. Above all, I am deeply grateful to the people of Ipswich West who have placed their trust in me to be the 12th member for Ipswich West. I will not let them down.

I follow in some big footsteps. Ellen Violet Jordan was first elected to represent Ipswich West in 1966. She was the second woman elected to this House and the first woman to represent the Labor Party. In 2017, a state seat was named after Vi Jordan—now held by my colleague Charis Mullen—in recognition of Vi's tireless work for the people of Ipswich West and Queensland.

Ipswich is Queensland's fastest growing city. By 2046, our current population of 254,000 will have doubled to 535,000. My seat covers beautiful country towns such as Walloon, Grandchester, Marburg and Rosewood—my home for the last 30-odd years—and all the townships and suburbs in between. It includes the sweeping properties in Karalee and Pine Mountain, as well as the more suburban areas of Yamanto, Brassall, Leichhardt and One Mile.

It is wonderful driving home along the Ipswich Rosewood Road and seeing the Great Dividing Range in the distance and the kangaroos grazing in the fields. More and more people are moving to this area to enjoy the beauty of its countryside. They are moving here to build their homes, to raise their families and to help build a community. As Vi Jordan did more than 50 years ago, I will fight hard to make sure this fast-growing area gets the funding and services it needs.

Since being elected, I have been honoured to attend graduations at some of the great schools across our electorate. At the incredible Leichhardt State School, 40 per cent of the children are Indigenous, and they are doing some truly amazing things in the community. They are helping students to gain an understanding and appreciation of their Indigenous culture, but they are also making sure that the Yagara language is not lost by teaching it to year 5 and 6 students.

I recently attended an Ipswich State High School graduation ceremony which showcased the cultural diversity of their school. There was a range of cultural performances from the students including songs and at least six variations of the haka. There are children at this school from all walks of life—New Zealanders, Samoans, Tongans, Africans and many more. Like the parents of these children and sometimes the children themselves, I am also proud to be an immigrant to this country. I was born in the very famous town of St Andrews in Scotland—the home of golf. In 1963, my mum and dad, together

with their four small girls under seven, sailed from Southport on the Sitmar Line's *Castel Felice* to Australia. After a six-week journey, we arrived at South Brisbane and settled into Yungaba Migrant Hostel at Kangaroo Point. My dad went to work as the clerk at JC Hutton's at Oxley and my mum worked as a nurse at Mount Olivet Hospital at Kangaroo Point.

Both my parents worked very hard to provide for their family. That would have been a struggle with four small girls and no family in Australia to fall back on. I saw my parents' determination to succeed in their new town of Brisbane. I share that same fiery determination and a belief in the value of hard work. They taught me that, if you are going to do something then you do it and you do not let people down.

My parents then decided to venture out on their own and start a small cleaning business. In time, they bought their first home in Oxley. During breaks in my schooling at Oxley State School and then Corinda State High School, I cleaned many offices and small shopping centres with my mum and dad and my sisters.

Like many, we went through the 1974 floods. My parents' home completely went underwater and they lost everything they owned. What struck me, though, was the strength of a magnificent community. People came together to support each other and provided food, clothes and shelter for many families. People came with tractors and cleared our property of all the debris that had flown in from the Oxley River. Cars would drive up the street with people offering food and clothing. There were many people who helped us during that time.

The 1974 floods had a lasting impact on me. It helped to forge my desire to be involved in the community and support those in need. That is why I got involved with Rosies-Friends on the Street in Ipswich who provide food for the homeless and those facing challenges in their lives. Today, the Leichhardt One Mile Community Centre does exactly the same type of work and is really making a difference in our community.

After a time, my mum and dad decided to go back to Scotland to help look after their aging parents, so I joined them and lived in Scotland for a number of years. My son, Blair, was born there in September 1992 but, as so many women in this country have experienced, domestic violence up-ended my life and I returned to Australia to be with my family. Mum and Dad also returned to Australia, and the four of us lived in the beautiful township of Rosewood, which was close to where my younger sister Debbie lived in Karalee.

As Blair grew up, I held many positions in the community. I was president of the Rosewood Kindy. I was a volunteer on the P&C at Ashwell State School, a beautiful small school just outside Rosewood, and the chief groundsperson mowing all the lawns. It took me hours, I can tell you. I was president of the P&F at Ipswich Grammar School and went on to serve on the board of trustees of the school for six years—something I was very proud of.

I got involved in all these things because I have always believed that to get the best local outcomes you need to be involved in your community. I volunteer at Rosies-Friends on the Street and see the struggles some of our people face—mental health challenges, drug issues, homelessness, couch surfing amongst their acquaintances and, sadly, an inability to afford food for their families or to top up their food supplies.

Having doorknocked and called more than 95 per cent of residents in Ipswich West, I feel I have gained a real insight into the challenges they face. Many of the doors were answered by single mums struggling with cost-of-living pressures and grateful for the Myles government's cost-of-living help. When I looked at those single mums, I saw myself 30 years ago moving to Rosewood—struggling at times to make ends meet but realising how lucky I was because I had the support of my family. Many do not, and that is why free TAFE, free kindy, good schools, housing and an accessible health system are so important to families to give their children the best start in life.

My story is a Labor story and an Ipswich story—a story I am incredibly proud of. My family has long been interested in politics. My grandfather James Braid, a lifetime Scottish nationalist, was the longest serving councillor in Scotland's history. When he died, his obituary in the *Scotsman* newspaper pointed to his service to Fife and, more importantly, to the people of East Neuk for whom he campaigned tirelessly for jobs in the wake of the diminishing local fishing industry spanning some six decades. After World War II broke out, my grandfather joined the Royal Air Force and was a pilot with Bomber Command. He flew special operations with the resistance in Europe and later during the Berlin airlift, for which he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. He was also awarded an OBE from the Queen. James Braid was a force to be reckoned with. His son, my uncle Jim Braid, travelled to Australia in the hope I would be elected, and I am very proud to have him here in the chamber today representing my mum and dad.

I have wonderful memories of my family sitting around the kitchen table, debating politics and listening to my father railing against the tyrannical ways of the Bjelke-Petersen government. As a child I learned that the union made us strong and that Labor gave us hope. With that in mind, I started working for a trade union, the Metal Workers Union, under the leadership of Aussie Vaughan. Aussie taught me so much—the importance of workers' rights, of being able to collectively bargain and so much more. These rights have shaped the lives of working people for generations. Aussie Vaughan was a humble and well-respected man across the union movement and when he passed away in 2010 he left a half century of industrial and political activism in his wake.

During my time at the Metal Workers Union I worked alongside Tom Barton, who then went on to become the member for Waterford and the environment minister in the Goss government. Tom asked my twin sister, Jackie, and me to work for him in his office, and so my career as a ministerial staffer began. I am proud to inform the chamber that I have been a ministerial staffer for five Labor premiers, having served in the office of the last two Labor premiers: Annastacia Palaszczuk and the member for Murrumba, Steven Miles. I have fought two election campaigns as a candidate with a Labor Party membership card in one hand and a union ticket in the other. I am perhaps a little different from many members in this chamber—my job has been politics for many years—but perhaps not so different in that, like them, I have worked hard to serve my community.

I am proud to have been part of strong reformist Labor governments that have brought about significant change to Queensland. I am proud our Labor government introduced the landmark reform Path to Treaty Act and the truth-telling and healing commission, which was a collective pledge to be courageous and curious and open to hear the truth of our state's history. We enshrined in legislation emission reduction targets of 75 per cent by 2035 and net zero by 2050. We invested over \$3 billion in housing and homelessness initiatives to help Queenslanders who face housing struggles. We delivered a huge building program worth \$107 billion, including \$710 million for Ipswich Hospital with 200 new beds and a new and expanding emergency department.

Speaking of Ipswich Hospital, I would like to acknowledge the hardworking doctors, nurses, health professionals, admin staff, clinical assistants and operational service workers—all of those vital workers across our state public health system. I would particularly like to call out our fantastic operational workers—people who cook the meals and deliver them to patients, all those workers in security, wardspeople, cleaners and groundspeople. These are the people who keep our public hospitals running, which is why I am so proud to be a member of their union, the AWU. Despite their fantastic work, they are often the first to be considered for cuts and outsourcing by governments. In this place I will always stand up for Queensland Health operational workers—for their job security, wages, safety and conditions.

Labor made some significant social reforms during its period in government. They include voluntary assisted dying legislation, women's reproductive rights—this played such a huge part in the recent election—and the introduction of the Civil Partnerships Act 2011. I was also part of a government that implemented the recommendations of the *Not now, not ever* report into domestic and family violence—an issue very close to my heart. Queensland became the first Australian state or territory to support pill testing and drug law reform. We introduced significant cost-of-living reforms which I know the people of Ipswich West welcomed, as this was the issue raised with me the most when I knocked on doors.

I could not have attained such a privileged position as I now hold without the help and support of many people. Those people know who they are. I would like to take this opportunity to make special mention of two people: the federal member for Blair, Shayne Neumann; and Madonna Stott, my campaign manager. Both have done so much for me. Shayne's advice and guidance throughout the campaign were second to none. He is a tireless worker for the people of Blair and one of the hardest working people I know. I will never forget his encouragement and support. When I was unsuccessful at the March by-election, Shayne Neumann and the former treasurer, Cameron Dick, both encouraged me to get back out into the community and continue to listen to people, to their hopes, dreams and struggles. I promised I would advocate on behalf of them, as Steven Miles and Cameron Dick did with their cost-of-living relief package—the biggest relief package of any state government in history. I am deeply grateful to Madonna Stott, my campaign manager, a warrior and a friend. Madonna is practical, hardworking and no-nonsense, with a deep sense of what is right and wrong. She has a Labor heart through and through.

Time does not permit me to name everyone, but I would like to thank the many volunteers, ALP branch members—in particular the mighty Rosewood branch—unions, friends and family. They all worked tirelessly for me. I would like to thank Kate Flanders, our state secretary, and Zac Beers, our assistant state secretary, at party office for their support.

To Stacey Schinnerl, the state secretary of the AWU—and, may I say, the first woman to hold this position: thank you for your guidance and support throughout two hard-fought campaigns. Many thanks to the mighty Joey Kaiser; Max Braddy; Michael Pattemore, my wonderful field organiser; Emily Searle; and Frank Scattini—believe you me, they helped me with my social media—for their huge contribution to my campaign.

A big thank you must also go to Isabella Scattini, who was my organiser. She supported me every step of the way and I could not have done this without her. Thank you to my dear friend Alex Elliot, who has always supported and encouraged me and, more importantly, has always believed in me. These people and many more were with me doorknocking, doing early morning high-vis, letterboxing and phone calling. I will say it again: it is because of them that I am standing here. There are many unions that supported me—the Transport Workers Union and Josh Millroy, the Together union, the ETU and the Plumbers Union. I thank them all.

Earlier I spoke about the huge growth in Ipswich which has put considerable pressure on our road infrastructure. To that end, I want to make sure that the significant road announcements I made during both campaigns are completed on budget and on time. I announced state government funding of \$42.5 million for the Bremer River Bridge upgrade on the Warrego Highway, with matched funding by the federal government. The Bremer River Bridge is a vital connection point on the Warrego Highway, with some 30,000 vehicles crossing it every day. I want to see our heavy vehicle industry move as efficiently as possible through this stretch of road, with critical rehabilitation and strengthening works done.

I also announced \$138.5 million for the Mount Crosby interchange, with matched funding by the federal government. This project needs to be completed as quickly as possible for all the people living in Karalee and surrounding areas. I also announced \$20 million, along with Shayne Neumann, for a business case for the Amberley interchange. I will be calling on this government, when the business case is complete, to announce funding to get this dangerous intersection fixed.

During the campaign, both the LNP and Labor announced \$4 million for a business case for a second river crossing for Ipswich. Our commitment, however, included funding of \$142 million to build this vital bridge. When the business case is finalised, I want to see committed funding from this government for this crucial piece of infrastructure for the people of Ipswich.

To conclude, I would like to share two stories from the campaign. I come to this House at a time when the rights of women are being discussed around the world. During the election campaign and, more markedly, on election day, I faced a barrage of unfair criticism and scrutiny regarding my age. I had thought as a society we had moved past this type of age discrimination or gender-based ageism. It would appear that we have not. So, as the 100th woman to sit in this chamber, I say to every woman who has been overlooked in life and become invisible due to her age that in this place I will make sure they are not forgotten.

My other story is about Lilly, a young girl working in my local Rosewood supermarket, Drakes. Lilly came up to me after the election and excitedly congratulated me, telling me, 'I voted for you.' She then went on to say to me, 'I know Labor didn't win and the LNP will be in power, but I want them to know my vote matters.' She does not want Ipswich to be forgotten and neither do I—profound words from a young woman. So, to Lilly and all the people of Ipswich West, I come to this place determined to live out the Labor values I hold dear—fairness, social justice, inclusion and equality.

I am fortunate to have three wonderful sisters whom I love very much—Susan, Jackie and Debbie. Thanks to our parents, we are all strong-minded with a real sense of social justice. I thank my whole family for their help and support during this campaign. I could not have done it without them. In particular, I acknowledge my twin sister, Jackie. People who know me in this chamber know how much I love her and how much of a special bond we have. We just have to be careful; she might be sitting here sometimes instead of me!

Mr Butcher interjected.

Ms BOURNE: Yes. To my sons, Blair and Scott, I love you both very much. Thank you for everything you do for me, Blair. You are a wonderful boy.

Finally, to the people of Ipswich West, you have given me such a great honour to represent you in this place. I promise I will always fight for you. Thank you.