




Speech By
Hon. Amanda Camm

MEMBER FOR WHITSUNDAY

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ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

 **Hon. AJ CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (3.57 pm): Mr Deputy Speaker—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hunt): I call the member for Woodridge—sorry, Whitsunday.

Ms CAMM: A bit of a slip of the tongue, Mr Deputy Speaker? I appreciate that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have my L-plates on.

Ms Grace: I'd take offence if I were you!

Ms CAMM: I take that interjection from the member for McConnel. It is a privilege to be able to make my address-in-reply to the speech given by Her Excellency the Governor and to take my place in the 58th Parliament of Queensland. As Her Excellency did, I welcome the new members of the House, many of whom are on the government side.

In the previous four years, as the member for Whitsunday I engaged with both my community and my neighbouring communities in the Mackay and Mirani electorates. I welcome and make special mention of the new member for Mackay, Nigel Dalton, and the new member for Mirani, Glen Kelly. It was a lonely four years with Minister Dale Last as my sole neighbouring member of the LNP. I spent every day of the previous four years advocating for the people of Mackay, because the people of Mackay and the greater Whitsunday region deserved better than the lack of representation they had suffered by the previous member. I am very pleased to be joined by these new members of the government.

During that time we shone a light on what was the Mackay Hospital health crisis. Through that time advocating for women and families—sadly women who had lost their babies due to a failed health system under the former Labor government—I had the incredibly humbling experience of sitting at the kitchen table of my constituents in Airlie Beach, Jenna and Andre McGregor, who lost their baby boy at just four days old. I will never forget this sorrow, nor their courage in continuing to speak out at the failings of the Mackay Hospital and Health Service. I will also not forget the courage of Melissa Ferrier, who shared with me her personal botched surgery story and the almost 18 months of rehabilitation and repair. While many of those opposite claimed we were scaremongering, our community had women who were being butchered. I congratulate the health minister for his reforms to the health service and also in reinstating confidence in the Mackay Hospital and Health Service.

Across my community we have seen significant growth, in particular in the northern beaches of Mackay up to Proserpine and the Airlie Beach-Cannonvale communities. It has been wonderful to see the southern migration as my community has continued to grow. Throughout this growth we saw an emerging housing crisis with the lack of housing supply and cost-of-living challenges which were impacting the workforce and the availability to support our tourism industry.

Over the previous four years we also experienced a rise in youth crime—something I had never experienced in my hometown of Mackay. We saw a youth crime crisis, impacting everyone's ability to feel safe in their home and in their community. I want to take this opportunity to congratulate Premier David Crisafulli and Deputy Premier Jarrod Bleijie on their appointment and their endorsement by the Queensland people. They took to the state election a disciplined plan that was focused on the things that mattered to Queenslanders. I am proud to be part of the cabinet that is now delivering, along with my ministerial colleagues and members, on healing the health crisis, investing in housing to ensure everyone can realise the dream of owning a home, bringing in the Making Queensland Safer Laws and investing in early intervention with regard to the youth crime crisis. I am proud to be part of a government that has not introduced new taxes and that is giving real benefit to Queenslanders to ensure they can afford to live in our great state.

Throughout my campaign and during the last four years advocating for canefarmers and those from the agricultural sector, they shared with me their frustration at the lack of engagement by the previous government when it came to water plans and water allocation and a fundamental understanding of primary industries and primary production. I am pleased to be part of a government that will deliver upon ensuring those farmers and primary producers are supported and our policies are implemented in a way that they are engaged and consulted with because they are part of the heartland of the Whitsundays.

The greater Whitsunday electorate has dealt with what can only be described as a diabolical lack of investment. When it comes to road infrastructure, whether it be Goorgana Plains, Hamilton Plains, Shute Harbour Road or the Bruce Highway, the lack of investment in maintenance, along with the lack of ability to deliver, was something that we saw from the previous Labor government. I am proud to be part of a government that will invest in both road maintenance and new infrastructure projects so that the tourism industry across my community can thrive and they are not cut off for three quarters of the year when it rains, when our airports are cut off and when the workforce that is needed is cut off.

When it comes to lifestyle, we enjoy some of the best fishing, both recreational and commercial, product in the world. Many times in this House I have expressed the frustration of constituents. I have brought forward the complaints and stories of injuries suffered by my local constituents at what was the most poorly designed boat ramp I have ever seen in the history of Queensland—the Shute Harbour boat ramp. I was pleased to take to the election a commitment to deliver, in partnership with the Whitsunday Regional Council, a new boat ramp facility for Shute Harbour. I know that my fishermen right across the greater Whitsunday region have welcomed that commitment.

We also took to the election, through the campaign and through consultation, a focus on grassroots community sports in the lead-up to the 2032 Olympics. I pay tribute to clubs across my community, such as the Eimeo Surf Life Saving Club, which is a hub for our community; the Dolphins Football Club that has seen a massive growth in participation of young footballers, both male and female, across the community and right up to the senior years; as well as the Airlie Beach Bowls Club and the Northern Beaches Bowls Club, which are hubs for the northern beaches with their investment in the local community and the support that they give to local clubs across the community. I was pleased to make a commitment, as part of our election campaign, to deliver shade for them and to contribute to their redevelopment, which will be a spectacular redevelopment to be opened later this year.

I was proud to stand with the member for Mackay and make a commitment to Mackay Netball and to Harrup Park that will be central to cricket to ensure we can deliver on our regional commitment as part of the Olympic and Paralympic Games. We will deliver on commitments to my Whitsunday Brahmans to support clubhouse upgrades and the master plan vision that they have for Rugby League in the Proserpine community. My dad played Rugby League for the Whitsunday Brahmans and I am proud to support that club and to see the younger generations who will go on to represent our region and our community. Grassroots sport is not only at the heart of my history but also at the heart of a future thriving regional and rural community.

I pay tribute to Elizabeth Hackett. We have made a commitment to the Whitsunday Skyway, a significant ecotourism project for not only the Whitsundays but also the entire state. I pay tribute to her tenacity, her commitment to the tourism sector, her commitment to customer service excellence and her commitment to First Nations and ecotourism when those opposite asked her to invest her own private funds and equity to deliver the Skyway project. We are a government that will make sure that the project is delivered. It is a significant tourism project in the lead-up to the 2032 Olympics. I am very confident it will be delivered well before that.

I pay tribute to those who work in our community each and every day, whether it be the Zonta clubs, Lions clubs or Rotary clubs, many of which I get to engage with each and every day. My volunteer marine rescues—I have three across my electorate: in Mackay, Midge Point and the Whitsundays—do

incredible work volunteering across our community. I pay tribute to my surf life saving club and the incredible work that they do in patrolling and saving lives and give a particular shout-out to significant volunteers Ross Gee and also Bill, who are incredibly hardworking volunteers. They have clocked up an incredible number of volunteer hours over the course of the last 12 months.

In my time as the shadow minister, we took to the election one of the most comprehensive policies for the child protection system in the Safer Children, Safer Communities policy as well as a policy platform and key actions and deliverables around domestic and family violence, both crisis response and prevention, along with a focus on perpetrator accountability. I think that is something that the state of Queensland has not focused on in the last decade.

Throughout that period, I was proud to be able to listen to the stories of victim-survivors from across the state. I heard constantly about how they were failed by the previous Labor government. They were failed through the DNA debacle. I take this opportunity to thank the Blackburn family for sharing their experience following the murder of Shandee Blackburn. Also shared with me was an experience of a constituent of the member for Toowoomba North. I will never forget sitting in his office and hearing her describe her harrowing experience as a victim of rape and how she was failed by the DNA lab, the Labor Party and the government of the day which did not ensure that she received justice.

I congratulate the Attorney-General for her commitment and her work, which I know is going to be nothing short of a challenge, to ensure we deliver integrity back to forensic services in Queensland. That is what Queenslanders deserve. For four years we watched the biggest maladministration ever played out by any government. It happened under those opposite and was overseen by multiple failed ministers, health ministers and attorneys-general. We should never let Queenslanders forget that victims of crime have had to live with the consequences, whether it is a family suffering the loss of a murdered daughter or a young woman who was raped by multiple people she still had to see in the streets of her home town.

I am pleased that the government has brought forward comprehensive policies and that I have been appointed a minister, across multiple portfolios, to deliver upon the policy platform of the LNP. It aligns with our values. It aligns with our commitment to respecting the money of Queensland taxpayers. We are continuing to do what we said we would do through our election commitments, the policies that we are rolling out and the budget that we will soon debate.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the tenacity of the volunteers who worked throughout the campaign. It was not an easy campaign as I spent a lot of time travelling the state to support other members in sharing the commitments and the policies that we took to the election. I thank the volunteers. I thank my campaign manager, Shelley Argent, and wish her every success in her future. I take the time to acknowledge my electorate staff, Manuela, Jakki and Belinda, who gave up much of their time to coordinate the volunteers who worked across the electorate and took leave to do so. I will never forget the number of hours they spent manning the polling booths. I also thank and acknowledge my federal member, Andrew Willcox, and his wife, Raylene, for the support that they provided me throughout the election campaign.

I acknowledge our local media and, in particular, our free paper, *Mackay and Whitsunday Life*. Rachel and Amanda do an incredible job in supporting our community by delivering really important everyday grassroots community news that people across Mackay and the Whitsundays rely upon. I also thank Deb at *Whitsunday News*. They have always been very respectful and very responsive in the way in which they have covered the stories of the day. I really thank them for that.

When I was first elected, I stood in this House and mentioned my grandmother Coral Camm. She had said that as a Camm had never been elected into opposition I was the first. My great uncle served in this House for almost 20 years as a member of government and a minister. I lost her a couple of years ago, while I was in opposition, so she never got to see me become a member of government and a minister. However, she is with me each and every day.

Mr Nicholls: She would be proud now.

Ms CAMM: She would be proud now and I thank her because she and my grandfather gave me considerable support. Right before the day of the election, we laid to rest my grandfather Joseph Carrello about whom I spoke in my maiden speech. It is due to him that I have the work ethic that I have. He was an enormous influence in my life. He will be forever missed by my family. We were able to lay him to rest just prior to the election.

No member of this House can do what they do without enormous sacrifice and support. I take this opportunity to thank my beautiful children—Lachlan, Abigail and Braithan. I am so very proud of them. They are young adults living their own lives and doing incredible things. My youngest son is in

year 12 and I spend a lot of time away from home. They have grown up to be independent, incredible and capable young people. They continue to inspire me and keep things light each and every day. I thank them. I thank my mum, my brother and my sister for their ongoing support.

I acknowledge and thank the LNP party, my SEC and all of the volunteers. We are a movement that embraces our values. I think we live and work our values each and every day, particularly in the policies that we brought forward to the last election. I am very proud to serve as part of the Crisafulli government. I look forward to delivering not just on behalf of the people of my community in the Whitsunday electorate but also for all people across Queensland.