



Speech By
Hon. Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

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MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Welford, Hon. RJ

 **Hon. AC POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation) (10.08 am): I rise to make a short contribution on the condolence motion for Rod Welford. My first interaction with Rod was when I joined the community engagement division which was initially under Deputy Premier Terry Mackenroth but subsequently under Premier Peter Beattie. It was my job to brief ministers in preparation of the various regional ministerial community forums that were held around the state. Suffice to say that Rod was always one of the most engaged and respectful in those briefings and in terms of the forums themselves. I was going to make a comparison and a contrast with some of his contemporaries at the time, but given the Hon. Matt Foley is sitting in the gallery, I will leave it at the fact that it probably says a lot about Rod Welford and his personality and, as many have said, about his interest in people first and foremost.

Rod and I clearly have different political persuasions, but one thing we share is a love of the environment that transcends simply being the minister. I confessed to his partner, Gayle, when we caught up earlier this morning that I took that passion seriously. As an indicator of my competitive spirit, last time I was the environment minister we had a scoreboard in the ministerial office of the longest serving environment ministers the state had had and at the top was Rod Welford. I was on track to beat him until the premier of the day decided we would go to an early election in January, so I fell a couple of months short. Well, Rod, I got ya, but it took me two terms with a hiatus of 10 years.

Rod and I, beyond the portfolio, also share a lot of environmental interests. He was an honorary member of the board of the International River Foundation, a foundation to which I have just now had the privilege of being appointed as a director. Rod and I interacted often when he served as the CEO of the Australian Council of Recycling and we have a shared passion for driving more recycling in the state of Queensland.

As the Premier and others have mentioned, Rod made an incredible personal bequest to Queensland Gives of \$5 million. I recently caught up with the CEO, Tara Castle, and she was expressing her gratitude for that. Rod specifically earmarked one of my favourite organisations—one of his favourite organisations—the Queensland Trust for Nature, as a recipient of that bequest. I know from talking to Dr Liz O'Brien and her team that we are looking at ways we can put that to good use. Rod is still giving me instructions. Gayle handed me some notes that Rod left for me around what I need to be doing with Queensland Trust for Nature. I look forward to taking that back to the department and seeing if we can deliver on what Rod left. As others have said, he was extraordinarily loved and respected across the environmental sector. He has left an extraordinary legacy in that space. I acknowledge Gayle, her daughter, Elena, Karen and Stephen. Vale, Rod Welford.