




Speech By
Hon. Ann Leahy

MEMBER FOR WARREGO

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Regional Agricultural Shows

 **Hon. A LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers) (2.29 pm): The Western Queensland show circuit is well and truly underway. Shows are a great part of rural and regional Queensland and the ag show season is looked forward to by many. For many rural and regional communities across the state, the local ag show is the highlight of the year. They are a place where locals come together to connect, compete and celebrate all things community and agriculture.

The local ag show supports and showcases local communities. They remind us just how vital agriculture is to all of us. They are not just about ribbons and rides; they tell a story and they deserve to be supported. Shows are marked on the Queensland calendar many months in advance, and I know many people look forward to them every year. I know this firsthand. Although it is hotly debated on this side of the House who has the best ag show, I am pretty confident that Warrego leads the way. Be it from Tara to Dalby, St George to Dirranbandi or Wallumbilla to Charleville or to Roma, ag shows are evidence of a thriving community.

Since 1822, agricultural shows have been part of the Australian culture, and their history runs deep into our culture. They are quintessentially Queensland. In 2012, a study showed that ag shows contribute \$965 million per annum to the Australian economy. Ag shows have their challenges, though, in relation to tenure issues, public liability insurance, volunteers and also, in many cases, fit-for-purpose infrastructure. Whether it is funding or support, the shows need the backing of their local communities and also of governments to ensure that ag shows continue for the next 100 years.

The Crisafulli LNP government will work in partnership with our ag shows to help them thrive into the future. We will be backing and empowering our local ag shows to continue to support the heart of rural and regional Queensland. Under the Crisafulli LNP government, our commitment is clear: stronger ag shows, stronger regions and a stronger Queensland for generations to come. I know that the member for Callide will be looking forward to the Chinchilla ag show as that comes up on the show circuit.

Mr Head: This weekend.

Ms LEAHY: This weekend—just a bit of an advert for the Chinchilla ag show. I know the member for Gympie spoke about his show as well. Shows really are such an important part of the social fabric of our communities, right across rural and regional Queensland. I was delighted to meet with Queensland Ag Shows the other day when I was going to my Roma Show, and it was great to catch up with them and hear the issues that are important to ag shows.