



Speech By  
**Charis Mullen**

**MEMBER FOR JORDAN**

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## ADJOURNMENT

### Bondi, Deaths

 **Ms MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (9.08 pm): On the afternoon of 14 December I walked from parliament to Queens Park in the city to join the first day of Hanukkah celebrations with our Jewish community. I remember thinking how mild and lovely the weather was that afternoon after what had felt like the most oppressive heat of our Queensland summer. I also remember thinking that I was happy for our Jewish community that the weather was perfect for their celebrations. To be honest, in the back of my mind I also had another niggling thought. Queens Park is a very central and open location and I was concerned that, despite their best intentions, the Hanukkah celebrations could be interrupted by protesters.

Why did I have this thought? Maybe it is because I had become so conditioned to seeing our Jewish community hold their events in private spaces, behind gates and surrounded by the CSG, their own Community Security Group.

The celebrations for Hanukkah were in full swing—singing, food stalls, children reciting verses of the Torah—but, as we sat in preparation for the lighting of the large menorah, news began to trickle in that there had been an incident at Bondi Beach involving the Jewish community. What should have been a joyous celebration of the victory of light over darkness was instead forever tarnished by a targeted act of pure anti-Semitic evil.

What occurred that day is a terrible tragedy—the murder of 15 innocent Australians: Edith Brutman; Dan Elkayam; Rabbi Yaakov Levitan; Peter Meagher; Eli Schlanger; Adam Smyth; Boris Tetleroyd; Tania Tretiak; Tibor Weitzen; Marika Pogany; Alex Kleytman, who was a Holocaust survivor; Boris Gurman and Sofia Gurman, two everyday Australians who amazingly tried to disarm the terrorists as they arrived and before they went on their massacre; Reuven Morrison, a businessman who threw rocks or bricks at the gunmen, knowing that he most likely would not survive; and, as we all know, 10-year-old Matilda, the youngest of the victims. We also know there was nothing random about this act of violence. This was an act of terror by individuals with hate in their hearts and guns in their hands.

There are moments in our nation's history that confront us with unimaginable horror and grief, but they also test the quiet assumptions of decency, mutual care and safety that represent the best of Australia's values. The growing hate, racism and awful vitriol we are seeing in our country is also not random. It is being inflamed by those who seek political advantage and not national unity. As a nation and a state we must respond with strength, not partisanship. We must address both the motive and the means by which Bondi was allowed to occur. This is what Jewish Australians deserve and it is an outcome that we on this side of the House are focused on, because an attack on Jewish Australians is an attack on all Australians.