




Speech By  
**Hon. David Crisafulli**  
**MEMBER FOR BROADWATER**

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Record of Proceedings, 12 March 2025

**MOTION OF CONDOLENCE**

**Beard, Mr PF**

 **Hon. DF CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Premier and Minister for Veterans) (9.36 am): I move—

1. That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of services rendered to this State by the late Peter Francis Beard, a former member of the parliament of Queensland and deputy leader of the Liberal Party;
2. That Mr Speaker be requested to convey to the family of the deceased gentleman the above resolution together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the Members of the Parliament of Queensland in the loss that they have sustained.

Today, the House is paying its respect to Peter Francis Beard, who served as a member of the Legislative Assembly from 1986 to 1989, and extending our condolences to his family. While his time in this House was short, Peter Beard can claim a unique record: he is the only member of the Liberal Party to have held the then seat of Mount Isa. Peter Beard was a son of Mount Isa. He was born in Mount Isa. He married his wife, Gayle; he raised his family in the city. He worked for its major single industry, Mount Isa Mines, and his political career was centred on the city.

Peter Francis Beard was born in Mount Isa on 22 May 1935. He went to several primary schools before attending All Souls in Charters Towers and then studied a Bachelor of Arts at the University of Queensland and trained to be a teacher. He returned to Mount Isa to teach from 1957 to 1965 and made such a good impression on the students that when he first became ill Peter's family received messages of love and support from former students who are now aged in their 70s.

It should be acknowledged that upon his election to parliament he noted that his father and grandfather were miners and that he and three of his children worked for the company. Peter Beard joined the staff of Mount Isa Mines in 1965, serving as a public relations executive. He was the face of Mount Isa Mines in the region and he connected with people so easily that politics was second nature to him. The 1986 election saw the Liberal Party make a concerted effort to re-establish itself in Queensland. Peter Beard was successful in winning Mount Isa from the sitting ALP member. Thirty-eight years ago, on 10 March 1987, Peter Beard outlined in his maiden speech what motivated him to enter politics to represent the people of that great city. He said—

I was born in Mount Isa when it was very much less than a city; in fact, it was little more than an embryo company town rising above the canvas and bark huts of a mining camp...I want it understood early and clearly that Mount Isa is very much my home town. I have been intimately involved in its life for most of my life, and I am here as the representative of the people of that city, of Camooweal and of the countryside between and round and about.

In that speech he spoke of Mount Isa as a wealth creator, not a wealth consumer. He referenced the importance of the mining and pastoral industries, but he referred to the role of his electorate as a commercial and business centre and the base for many hundreds of public servants, teachers, police, court staff and state work staff.

Throughout his time in parliament, Peter Beard sought to highlight the specific challenges facing the people of Mount Isa: the viability of the cattle industry, the problems facing students needing to leave home for tertiary education, the need for suitable Aboriginal housing and the difficulties for residents in accessing adequate health care. Mount Isa and its people were always utmost in Peter Beard's mind.

At the same time, Peter Beard was a passionate advocate for private enterprise. He served as a member of the Parliamentary Buildings Committee and as the Liberal Party spokesman on mines and energy, northern development and primary industry. In early 1988, the Liberal Party moved to prepare its party for the crucial 1989 election. Angus Innes, the then member for Sherwood, became parliamentary leader and Peter Beard became his deputy, which was a position he held until 1989 when he lost his seat.

Peter Beard returned to Mount Isa Mines, became a policy adviser and used his vast knowledge, experience and many talents as a consultant and a speechwriter. Even in retirement he continued to serve the community, volunteering as a radio announcer for a show assisting people with cognitive decline in care facilities. Peter and Gayle supported charities helping with food distribution for people needing a hand. They sang in choirs and they attended language classes.

Peter Francis Beard passed away on 19 September 2024, aged 89. I place on record the government's thanks for the service that Mr Beard gave to this House and to the Queensland community. We welcome his daughter, Gabrielle Lawrence, and other members of Peter's family to the House. We extend our sympathy on his passing.