



Speech By
Donna Kirkland

MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

Record of Proceedings, 12 February 2026

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

McCamley, Sir G, MBE; Cowan, Mr G; Bahnisch, Mr R

 **Mrs KIRKLAND** (Rockhampton—LNP) (2.32 pm): Today I rise to offer condolences to three incredible community champions from Rockhampton and the Central Queensland region who have unfortunately passed this year.

Sir Graham McCamley MBE passed in January 2026. He was a Central Queensland cattleman whose leadership and innovation helped shape the modern Australian beef industry. He was a pioneer of the Brahman breed in Australia who established the influential red and grey Brahman studs. He was the founding president of the Cattlemen's Union of Australia in 1975 and gave producers a unified national voice during a difficult period for the industry. Early Cattlemen's Union of Australia conventions in Rockhampton drew thousands and helped shaped the advocacy structures that later became AgForce Queensland. National recognition was received by Sir Graham McCamley, with an MBE in 1981 and he was knighted in 1986 for service to agriculture and rural leadership. He is widely regarded as a founding father of the modern Australian beef industry—a pioneer and a national leader.

George Cowan passed in February 2026—a man whose life was defined by justice, compassion and unwavering advocacy. He spent more than three decades standing up for those without a voice, deeply respected by colleagues, clients and the wider community. He was a steadfast advocate for personal injury and accident compensation. In fact, he was made somewhat famous in 2016 for his lead as a lawyer on a groundbreaking case against the mining companies asking for them to be held accountable for fatigue management of drive-in drive-out workers. He was known for fighting for the battlers and for the little guy.

Ron Bahnisch passed in February 2026. He was one of the last Marlborough brigalow block settlers and a tireless advocate for cattle producers and landowners of our region. He was an inaugural member of the Cattlemen's Union and Property Rights Australia. He dedicated his life to fairness and the rights of all rural Queenslanders. In 1972 Ron and his wife, Lorna, were among the first to take on a brigalow scheme block, which they did with determination whilst managing a young family. As a regional chairman of the Cattlemen's Union, Ron helped lead the 1977 Gracemere saleyards blockade—bold grassroots advocacy that drew national attention. Ron never did anything by halves. He ensured the voices of Rockhampton's rural producers were heard in boardrooms across Queensland and in Brisbane.

Graham's, George's and Ron's legacies will live on in the people and communities they have helped, the colleagues and industries they have shaped and the families who loved them.

(Time expired)