



Speech By  
**James Martin**


**MEMBER FOR STRETTON**

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## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **Multiculturalism**

 **Mr MARTIN** (Stretton—ALP) (8.59 pm): I rise to address the recent anti-immigration protests in our capital cities, and I will start by proudly declaring that I am a migrant. I stand with 30 per cent of Australians born overseas and nearly half with a parent born abroad. Our strength lies in our unity. As my friend the former member for Stretton said, 'What unites us is what we have built—a vibrant, multicultural community.' Australia is something we have all built together, not something you can 'take back'. Migrants in my electorate—business owners, nurses, teachers, carers—work hard, follow the rules and give back, enriching our diversity. It is there for anyone to see in the Census data—higher than average education, household incomes and less reliance on welfare—so I will not stay silent while far-right extremists sow division and exploit issues like housing affordability and cost of living, blaming migration for every problem we face. Sadly, the LNP has failed to confront these fringe groups and risks letting the tail wag the dog. Too weak to act, it winks at extremism, threatening community cohesion. I urge the Premier to challenge these groups now and stand up to the right wing within his party. Stand up to the likes of Senator Price, whose comments are disgraceful and have alienated hardworking Queenslanders of Indian heritage.

There is always a place for legitimate disagreement and respectful debate about policy settings, including precise levels of immigration, but let us not confuse separate issues. The community, particularly younger Australians, holds legitimate concerns about housing affordability. These need to be addressed, but they should be addressed by unlocking supply. The fact is that Australia managed higher migration rates of 2.3 per cent annually from 1947 to 1960 without housing crises, so today's 1.7 per cent growth is not the issue; it is supply. The New South Wales Labor government has fast-tracked nearly 90,000 new homes this year through innovative reforms while the Crisafulli government sits idle. Queensland Labor's 50-cent public transport fares and federal policies like 20 per cent off student debt and free TAFE tackle cost-of-living pressure head-on. Meanwhile, the LNP is calling in housing developments to keep golf courses and watering down hate laws.

Governments at all levels need to address genuine economic issues that are feeding resentment and anger, or otherwise they will continue to be exploited by the far right. To deal with the housing crisis we must address the increasing delays in approvals that restrict supply and increase the speed of construction. We must get on with building social and affordable housing—all housing. A multicultural Queensland is who we are and I will not stand by while far-right groups poison our democracy while the LNP does nothing.