




Speech By
Lance McCallum

MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA

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ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (5.32 pm): I want to begin my address-in-reply speech by acknowledging that recently our community mourned the passing of Dr Harry Ratnam OAM, aged 74. Dr Harry, as he was known in our community, was based in Riverview where he cared for locals for 39 years before retiring only a few years ago. He worked very hard and passionately for our community for a long time and I was very privileged to be able to spend time with Dr Harry in my capacity as both the local member and a local resident.

Well known and much loved, Dr Harry established his Riverview practice in 1982 after moving from Malaysia. Dr Ratnam received the Ipswich Centenary Medal for volunteer services to our community in 2004 and in 2007 received the Order of Australia medal for services to medicine and to the broader Ipswich community. Dr Harry was also honoured by Ipswich City Council with the naming of a local park after him on Henty Drive in Redbank Plains, not too far from my hood. On behalf of our community, I say thank you, Dr Harry, for your dedicated service of almost four decades and our community's condolences to Dr Harry's wife, Raj, son Dinesh, daughter Reshni and of course his broader family.

I am honoured to receive the support, the confidence and the responsibility to represent our Bundamba community for a third time. It is a community that I love and it is my home. It is a rapidly growing community that has seen enormous changes, particularly driven through residential growth, over the five years that I have had the privilege and responsibility of serving the community as their member in this place. Over that time we have seen growth not only in residential population but also in the services that are being delivered there, whether it be health care, education or transport.

Whilst the Labor Party is in opposition following the 2024 election, locally in the city of Ipswich all members in this place are again Labor. I want to place on record and acknowledge the re-election of my neighbours—the member for Jordan, the member for Ipswich and I congratulate the member for Ipswich West on her election to this place. Indeed, I would like to also congratulate every member in this place whether they are newly elected members or whether they are returned members. Whether it has been a short term in this place or indeed many decades, it is an incredible privilege and responsibility that all 93 of us have in this place.

My city of Ipswich was very loud and clear in its choice of Labor members as their representatives in this chamber. I say that because I implore the government to respect the choice of the people of the city of Ipswich and my community of Bundamba whom they have chosen to represent them in this place. Far too often the discourse and the debate in this parliament and many others is reduced to a binary choice of one party or the other, of right or wrong. In fact, the systems and procedures in this place lend itself to that in terms of how votes are cast.

The Crisafulli government has made very lofty commitments right around our great state and the Labor opposition will absolutely hold the government to those commitments, whether it is improvements to local sporting clubs or to providing lower electricity bills and the essential services that our

communities need, particularly growing communities like our Bundamba community. I always say that anyone in our community can rely on me to fight for a fair go on their behalf and to have a crack because I see it as my job and as a Labor opposition we see it as our job to fight every day to make sure that people's voices are being heard and that our communities are getting their fair share. There is no doubt that there are so many households in so many communities, including my Bundamba community, that are suffering under the cost-of-living pressures that are so prevalent right throughout the state of Queensland and indeed across the nation.

My community has been crystal clear in saying that they want, they need and they expect support from their government when it comes to meeting these increasing cost-of-living pressures through meaningful and direct assistance. That includes energy rebates which the previous Labor government was very proud to deliver over several years, including last year with a \$1,000 rebate. That assistance needs to be continued for struggling households in our Bundamba community, as well as right throughout Queensland. It also includes things such as 50-cent fares. I acknowledge that during the election campaign the government matched Labor's commitment to make 50-cent fares permanent and the government has thus far been true to its word. I hope to see that continue over the term of this parliament.

I was very concerned to hear that the government has made a decision not to continue the freeze on registration which will mean that registration for Queensland's road users will increase. Increasing registration fees for vehicles at a time when so many households are doing it tough will only add pressure. I would implore the government to revisit that in its upcoming budget and not to jack up the price of registration.

When it comes to the \$200 FairPlay vouchers that save families a very significant amount when it comes to getting their kids into sport, I have spoken to many families with three or more children and these vouchers mean a saving of over \$600 per season for that family which helps them to get their kids into healthy activities. It also supports our local clubs that have seen an enormous uptick in enrolments. The wonderful people who support and keep our local clubs running are all volunteers. They all have busy lives. They have their own families. A lot of the time their kids play at the club and they played at the club when they were younger. These sports vouchers really make a difference, not only in terms of healthy active lifestyles for kids and not only in terms of saving families money right when they need it most but also by providing a great pathway for kids who might be at risk of going in the wrong direction. On behalf of the Bundamba community I would implore the government to continue to provide the \$200 FairPlay vouchers.

I am very humbled to be the shadow minister for energy. We have a power station in our community. I have had the pleasure of going out and spending time with the great crew at Swanbank many times. Ipswich more broadly has a proud history of providing energy to the state of Queensland. When it comes to the six months of the Crisafulli LNP government in Queensland from October last year, the record of this government in energy has been extremely disappointing. I would say it has been regrettable. We have seen the Callide C3 explosion cover-up, we have seen projects cut, such as the Pioneer-Burdekin pumped hydro energy storage project.

Mr Head interjected.

Mr McCALLUM: We have seen the re-scoping that is currently underway at Borumba.

Mr Head interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Member for Callide, your interjections are not being taken.

Mr McCALLUM: We have seen a significant downsizing of CopperString. Only half of it has been committed to be built: the eastern half of the line from Townsville out to Hughenden. We have communities on the western side from Hughenden out to Mount Isa who are wondering whether or not the line will be built all the way through as they expected. We have proponents along the line wanting to make very serious decisions around investment, job creation and economic growth who have had their plans thrown into disarray.

We have also seen defunding of job-creating projects in Central Queensland around emerging industries such as green hydrogen. CQ-H2 was defunded by a deliberate decision of this current government. There will be more threats coming throughout the term of this parliament, despite the promises by the Premier during the election campaign to deliver cheaper bills and a sustainable supply of energy, because they have committed to repealing our legislated renewable energy targets which increases risk for industry. I think it is a great shame and it is very unbecoming of members of the government to be throwing out cheap political interjections when what we are actually talking about here is literally billions of dollars of investment in the communities of some of the members opposite.

Mr Head interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Callide, your interjections are not being taken.

Mr McCALLUM: It might be a source of triviality for those on the other side of the House, but for Labor this is very serious. This is about job creation. This is about facilitating more investment, particularly into regional Queensland. It is about not losing the momentum that Queensland had, and still has, when it comes to attracting clean energy investment. We are a world leader when it comes to the energy transition. There are enormous opportunities that are at our fingertips, but we need to ensure that Queensland has the right policy settings, the right laws and the right regulatory environment to allow us to stay at the cutting edge of the energy transition. In my view, and in the view of my community because I have discussed it with many locals, this should not be a matter of partisan politics. We saw what the energy and climate wars cost this country when they were played out federally. In Queensland we cannot take retrograde steps.

I would like to finish by thanking the many people who offered their time, their support and their help. I have an amazing campaign team led by a gentleman named Elliott. They really went above and beyond during the campaign last year. To all of my local branchies, thank you for your support and guidance and for the always direct feedback that I receive.

I acknowledge the enormous number of people who were able to come out and help with pre-poll, be there on election day and set up booths: to Bruce from Goodna and the team at the St Francis Xavier booth; to Monesha, Ashton and the team who helped at Bellbird Park State School; to the team at Woodlinks State School; to Michael and the team at Redbank Plains State School; to Ian and the team that were at Redbank Plains State High School; and to the teams that were at the booths at Bundamba State School and Oasis Church of Christ.

Every single one of us in this House owes so many people an enormous debt of gratitude for their generosity in helping and supporting us. When it comes to those who are closest to us, our friends and our family, that also includes the sacrifices that we make. We all know that we make enormous sacrifices to do what we do to be community representatives. We make that choice willingly. Our friends and family do not make that choice as actively as we do, yet they make the same sacrifices. My partner, Susan, and her son, Sebastian, my mum and my dad, my brothers and my sister have my eternal and deep gratitude.

Thank you, Bundamba. I am humbled to continue to have the privilege and responsibility of serving you.