



Speech By
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MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA

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MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Welford, Hon. RJ

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (10.25 am): I rise to pay tribute to the late Hon. Rod Welford. As we have heard, before entering public service he was a solicitor and a barrister and was very passionately involved in lifesaving for his entire life, receiving many medals at state level and national level and he served in leadership positions with the Royal Life Saving Society of Queensland and, of course, his beloved Burleigh Heads surf lifesaving club. I will also mention his endless laps of the pool on level 7 at Parliament House when it was still there.

Rod was elected in 1989 and served for 20 years in this parliament, an incredible contribution. During that time he was an absolutely fierce local advocate. We have heard a lot about Rod's contributions and achievements during his long and esteemed ministerial career. During his time as environment minister, which included the tree-clearing reforms and many others, the one that I probably remember most acutely as a much younger person was the establishment of Queensland's first Environmental Protection Agency. That was really a landmark moment when it came to environmental protection sustainability in the state of Queensland.

Rod was, in the truest sense of the word, a reformer. He was able to think big, he was visionary and he was able to take that and put it into public policy in a way that delivered lasting reform—reforms that really stood the test of time and stood the test of change of government.

Rod was held in very high regard by those who served in this place with him. Post parliament his time spent committed to the issues that he devoted his life to, including environmental sustainability, saw him become the CEO of the Australian Council of Recycling. At that time it was the late 2000s. He championed, of course, recycling initiatives but also policies around e-waste and broader circular economy policies. Again, he was ahead of his time. His ability to see down the road and to see not only the challenges that were in front of us but also the ones that were coming was truly extraordinary.

With his appointment at Griffith University he continued to focus on sustainability and energy. There has been much mentioned—and rightly so—of his very generous legacy gift to Queensland Gives, but he also left a scholarship at Griffith University. At the very wonderful and well attended memorial that was held in Rod's honour, one of the vice-chancellors from Griffith University was there to pay tribute to another quiet part of Rod's enormous generosity.

Personally for me as a young man working as an adviser around this place, Rod was in the saddle and he loomed large amongst his contemporaries, many of whom have been mentioned. One thing that I reflect on personally was that he always gave an enormous amount of his time to young people coming up through the party—young Labor believers—and he was always extremely supportive and generous. It always really stuck with me that he always had time for young people. Rod had a life that was very well lived. He leaves a wonderful legacy. I want to pay tribute to Gayle, to Lisa, to his loved ones and to his family. Vale, Rod Welford—gone far too early.