




Speech By
Margaret Nightingale

MEMBER FOR INALA

Record of Proceedings, 2 April 2025

MOTION

Weather Events, Response

 **Mrs NIGHTINGALE** (Inala—ALP) (8.07 pm): I rise today in support of the motion and want to associate myself with the remarks of other speakers. To our farmers: our hearts are with you. We know that these floods mean the loss of livestock and crops. I also know that the loss goes far beyond just the financial impact. It is deep, personal loss and it is about people's hard work, years of effort and hopes for the future. Sadly, this loss is widespread—from isolated stations to small towns like Thargomindah. People are facing the loss of their homes and possessions, damage to the environment and infrastructure and are subject to physical and psychological suffering.

Although my electorate is far from this flood event, I feel a connection to the communities that are experiencing this devastation. This connection was forged by my grandparents who, although Inala was their home, had a house at Eromanga due to my grandfather's work. His name was Stan Jensen, and he spent a great deal of time from the 1950s to the 1980s putting down essential artesian bores in Far West Queensland. In fact, he worked out there until the day he died in his seventies—committed to being there to support these communities.

He would tell me stories of these great places and the great people who live there. I was once lucky enough to do a ride-along as a young child. I was struck by the beauty of the open spaces and the dry, dusty earth that stretched for miles. To me, as a child, it was a place that, due to its vastness, could make you feel so small and insignificant and so essential and welcomed at the same time. The contrast between the images in my memories of drought and dust and the visions I am seeing of this flooded landscape could not be more stark.

As the member for Ferny Grove noted, drought and flooding rains have always been a hallmark of the Outback, and, sadly, they are no strangers to the worst of what Mother Nature throws their way. What I also noticed as a child was the enduring strength of the folk who call these places home. They breed them tough out west, and I saw this quality in my grandfather. This enduring strength has never been more on display than it is now. As the water has risen, so too has the community's efforts to endure.

I want to take a moment to thank those who have stepped up in such a big way. To those locals who worked tirelessly building a levee to try to protect Thargo and those who are coming from near and far to lend a hand to those in need: thank you. Please know that the hearts and thoughts of those of us in the city are with you. Recovery will take time and it will not be easy, but your communities know how to pull together in tough times.

I have no doubt that the people of Thargomindah and the surrounding areas will rise from this tragedy stronger than ever. Together, you will rebuild and the spirit of resilience will carry you through. We are there with you every step of the way.