




Speech By
Mark Boothman

MEMBER FOR THEODORE

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ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (12.52 pm): I rise to reply to the Governor's opening speech for the 58th Parliament. First and foremost, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to my very good friend the member for Condamine on his well-deserved promotion to the esteemed role of Speaker of this chamber. I also extend congratulations to the member for Lockyer for doing an absolutely fantastic job as one of the Deputy Speakers. In the last term of parliament I worked closely with the member for Condamine. His patience is certainly renowned. I note that this place will certainly test that patience. All I can say is that I am glad he is in the role and not me because I do not have the patience that he has. As a few members have said to me, 'If they do not behave themselves, if in doubt, kick them out.' It is a good little saying.

I congratulate all the returning members from the 57th Parliament, along with all the newly elected members, those who have now joined the LNP team and those on the other side. Your names will be placed alongside the 1,200 names that adorn the walls outside of this chamber. To my deputy whips: congratulations on your roles. I believe that every member should be a whip at some time to learn what it is like to herd members and make sure people do their spot on the roster. I would also like to congratulate the opposition whip on his role.

Mr Ryan: It's easy.

Mr BOOTHMAN: He does not need to have a quorum, does he? Most importantly, I wish the members who retired at the last parliament all the best in their life and their future ambitions and dreams. I wish Lachlan Millar, a good friend of mine, Mark Robinson, Michael Hart and Darren Zanow all the best in their future endeavours.

To the member for Broadwater: a sincere congratulations on becoming the 41st Premier of Queensland. Your discipline, work and inspiring leadership have motivated the LNP team to a remarkable achievement. To the member for Kawana, the Deputy Premier: your unwavering focus and legendary determination are commendable. Special thanks must go out to the LNP state executive.

Last year, on 26 October, the people of Queensland voted for change. They voted for safety where you live, health services when you need them, respect for your money, a place to call home and a government that works for you. The Crisafulli government will restore integrity in government. It is seldom that we ever hear of a government coming in and scrapping taxes. The Crisafulli government has scrapped two taxes. This is the fresh start that the Queensland population voted for.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to the local Theodore State Executive Council, the many groups that came out to volunteer and our local leaders who consistently offer their local support. There are so many people I want to thank and I am tempted to read out all their names, but I feel that it would take up pretty much the remainder of my speech. Many of those people spent days helping. I had a fantastic team of individuals who went out and did letterbox drops on a regular basis. I had individual SEC members who would wear out their shoes on a regular basis. They were quite proud to show me their footwear after the work they had done.

There are so many people I could mention here today—people like Steve, Warren, Robert, Daniel, the other Steve—for their outstanding efforts during the campaign. It was not only them but also community groups that supported what I was doing. The members of those community groups got behind me and pushed the voting population to support the LNP at this election. Those groups included my local men's sheds, cricket and other sporting groups. Environmental groups were very supportive after all these years I have done tree planting with them and given some of my electoral allowance to them to cover the cost of chemicals for their water testing. Something that I have always been passionate about is our environment, especially in our local community. Business owners and business groups were also supportive. The list goes on.

I want to thank my family: my wife, Kanako, and my three wonderful children, Eleanor, Samuel and Maya. My wife would say that she is not sure about the 'wonderful' part. She would say to me, 'Mark, while you've been away, they've been playing up and causing a bit of grief.' She is the anchor of my life. My family is everything to me. As most members in this chamber would say, we do this for our community but also for our families and to make a better world for our children.

My father, Peter, somebody who is certainly getting on in years—I will not say his age—works harder than somebody half his age. He is incredibly dedicated to the Liberal National Party cause. He rings me on a regular basis to express frustration about what is happening in Australia and around the world. He grew up as a sharefarmer's son and has a true passion for agriculture. He is never happier than when he is out there on the farm getting red soil all over his hands. To my mother, Marjorie: I know that you find it difficult helping these days. We know that you are there in spirit, egging us on. You cannot do the work you used to be able to do, but thank you for all your support. It is a trying time for our family.



Mr BOOTHMAN (Theodore—LNP) (3.30 pm), continuing: Before lunch, I got almost halfway through in the time that was allocated. I would like to thank my brother and his fiancée for the help they gave. As I said, there were so many people who helped in the LNP campaign in the Theodore electorate. It is truly an honour for me to see so many people coming out to help. Most importantly, I wish to thank the people of the northern Gold Coast, particularly the residents of the Theodore electorate. Whether you voted for me or not, I will continue to do my utmost when it comes to serving our local community. I am truly passionate about the northern Gold Coast. It runs deep in my veins. As a person who is proud to call himself a South-East Queenslander, it is somewhere I have lived all my life. I can confidently say that there is no better place in the world than South-East Queensland, hence why so many people are moving to our region.

I want to acknowledge all of the candidates who put their names forward to represent their peers. Typically, campaigns on the Gold Coast are quite subdued and receive very little media attention, but this time Labor's candidate for Burleigh certainly made headlines when it came to her comments about the Queensland Police Service and the Theodore candidate faced scrutiny for being convicted for defrauding the blue card system with 42 blue card applications.

As I have always said, the Theodore electorate is in the lush green hills of the Gold Coast hinterland. We are the backdrop to the beautiful golden beaches of the Gold Coast. We certainly have a little part of paradise. We are also home to the beloved theme parks. Unfortunately, though, our beautiful location makes it very vulnerable to storm events. On Christmas Day 2023, as I have mentioned in this parliament previously, the northern Gold Coast suffered extensive damage and many houses continue to bear tarpaulins on their roofs. Once again, I urge insurance companies to fulfil their obligations and honour their agreements with their customers and pay the necessary funds to repair those properties.

One of the issues which certainly did come up with respect to the Christmas Day storm was the vegetation protection orders set down by councils. Many residents still have vivid memories of massive trees falling through their houses, destroying sheds and vehicles. Unfortunately, to this day, many residents continue to fight with council to remove these giant trees that are within striking distance of their homes. These trees—which go by the name of 'widow makers'—have the potential to claim more victims and to force up insurance costs. This is an issue that many residents have been expressing for quite some time—that we need to re-evaluate vegetation laws when it comes to councils and the protection of properties. We continually see cost-of-living pressures and higher insurance prices. It would help to alleviate some of that if councils could understand that vegetation management protection orders need to be relaxed when it comes to protecting one's homes and lives. During the storms we

had individual houses, such as one place out near Maudsland Road, where if anybody was sleeping in the bed or in the bathroom on that evening they would have been a casualty of that storm because massive branches went through houses in those areas.

In the aftermath of the Christmas Day storms, and more recently during Tropical Cyclone Alfred, our community came together with remarkable strength to support one another. We are certainly very lucky on the northern Gold Coast. Not only do we have a fantastic SES but we also have a fantastic Rural Fire Brigade which goes above and beyond. I recently had the privilege of presenting medals to these dedicated volunteers at an awards ceremony on the Gold Coast. It certainly was a humbling experience. I felt genuinely proud to know many of the individuals who received this recognition. It is well deserved. There are many others on the northern Gold Coast who give up their time to support our local communities. None more so than the local community groups who fundraise for others, like Rotary clubs and Lions' clubs. I give a big shout-out to the Coomera Valley Rotary, the Lions Club of Helensvale and the Lions Club of Upper Coomera.

We have some of the best sporting groups on the Gold Coast, which I will talk about later in my budget speech, but the individuals who run these sporting groups spend an enormous amount of time keeping young people interested in sport. They are parents, they are non-paid volunteers and they are individuals who give up many hours on the weekend and on weeknights working with young people to make the next sporting champions. Whether it is the Helensvale Swimming Club, the Coomera Cubs baseball, the local cricket club the Helensvale Hawks, the Coomera Hope Island Cricket Club, AFL or Rugby League—you name it—we have it on the northern Gold Coast in the Theodore electorate. There are so many fantastic facilities.

In closing, as a lot of the topics I want to talk about will be in the budget reply speech, I will not elaborate but as I said in my maiden speech 13 years ago—

No matter what your political beliefs or your political ideals, I am here to represent all equally and fairly. I am your grassroots servant.

I have done my best over many, many years to continue on with that tradition. Thank you for allowing me to make my address-in-reply to the speech given by the Governor.