




Speech By
Hon. Meaghan Scanlon

MEMBER FOR GAVEN

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MOTION

Weather Events, Response

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (6.01 pm): Gold Coasters have certainly been through it in the last year, like many other parts of Queensland, with storms over the previous Christmas and now Tropical Cyclone Alfred. My priority at all points has been to make sure that everyone in my community was safe, had shelter and that nobody was left behind. Clearly that was not a priority though of all members of this parliament, as we discovered in question time yesterday. On Monday, 3 March I wrote to the housing minister asking for urgent clarity on the Crisafulli government's plan to protect those experiencing homelessness after hearing very little from the government about what was happening for some of the most vulnerable Queenslanders. While waiting to hear—

Mr O'Connor interjected.

Ms SCANLON: I take the interjection from the member for Bonney. You are now the housing minister. You may not want to be, but you are now responsible. While waiting to hear of the government's plans, I reached out to services in my community and I met with a number of rough sleepers to make sure that they were aware of what options were available because of the absence of information from the government at the time. Charities like Set Free Care and Burleigh Church of Christ stood up facilities run by volunteers with little to no government assistance because they knew that people without shelter were going to be the most impacted by this natural disaster. Regrettably on Thursday, right as the cyclone was predicted to hit my community, it was decided to shut down the Nerang evacuation centre which really did put a lot of rough sleepers in the lurch because that is where police, myself and other people had told those people to go and unfortunately it was closed. Instead of ensuring that people knew accurate information, the housing—

An opposition member interjected.

Ms SCANLON: I take the interjection from the member. If it was not safe, where was the communication from the housing minister to rough sleepers?

Mr O'Connor: It was the council.

Ms SCANLON: I take the interjection that he is blaming council and not taking any responsibility. There were two places that were set up. I will acknowledge that there were some incredible volunteers who set up those two places. In fact, the department of housing and minister were referring people to those organisations that were run by volunteers—

Mr O'Connor interjected.

Ms SCANLON:—and supported by the council. When they closed their doors, those people exited into homelessness despite the promises made—

Mr O'Connor interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Bonney, cease your interjections. Member for Gaven, I ask you to address your comments through the chair.

Ms SCANLON:—sorry, Mr Speaker—by the Premier and the member for Bonney, both of whom were repeatedly saying to people that anyone experiencing homelessness was going to be offered accommodation. That is not the case. I have stories and I know that the member for Inala has stories. Multiple people have experienced—

Mrs Gerber: Tell us about headleases.

Ms SCANLON: I take the interjection from the member for Currumbin. She wants me to talk about headleasing. I do not know why you want to talk about it because whistleblowers have told us that the government was not wanting to take any—

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Ms SCANLON: It is a whistleblower complaint, member for Currumbin.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Currumbin—

Ms SCANLON: You used to rely on whistleblowers to make your political points, but now when you are being criticised you are not interested, just like you used to be supportive—

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members on my right! Member for Gaven, address your comments through the chair.

Ms SCANLON: It is just like the LNP used to believe in frank and fearless advice and transparency until it got into government and thought, 'No, we don't want to actually see that.'

I can totally understand why homelessness services are now calling for a housing summit, because these issues need to be addressed. I doubt that we will be seeing Peter Dutton at that summit, because of course we know how he feels about social housing. He has spent the last year and all of his political career continuously opposing investment in social housing, so I am not sure how the member for Bonney reckons he is going to achieve his housing targets if his mate gets elected as the prime minister of this country. We also saw Peter Dutton vote against—

Ms Camm interjected.

Ms SCANLON: I take the interjection from the member for Whitsunday. The housing targets that you released are reliant on federal government investment—federal government investment—

Mr SPEAKER: Through the chair.

Ms SCANLON:—so if the LNP gets in you cannot deliver on your targets.

Ms Camm interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Whitsunday, you are now warned.

Ms SCANLON: If only Peter Dutton was as passionate about housing as he is about travelling interstate to make money for the LNP. Instead of filling sandbags, he was filling Liberal National Party coffers. That is their priority.