




Speech By  
**Hon. Meaghan Scanlon**

**MEMBER FOR GAVEN**

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Record of Proceedings, 12 June 2025

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY**

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (8.46 pm): I start by acknowledging the traditional owners of the lands of which I have the privilege to represent—the Kombumerri people—and pay my deepest respects to those elders past, present and emerging. In preparing this address-in-reply, I went back to my first speech in this place and was reminded of my earliest memory of politics, which was when I was in grade 7. I had watched the movie *Rabbit-Proof Fence* and learned about the stolen generation. I was only 12 but I can distinctly remember how angry I felt as I discovered that our prime minister at the time, John Howard, was refusing to say sorry for the well-known and well-documented atrocities that were carried out against First Nations people in this country. It was really the first time that I understood the power of politics—in this case not for good.

I gave my first speech in this House on the week of the 10th anniversary of Kevin Rudd's national apology to the stolen generations. I said then that this was a timely reminder of how much more we needed to achieve on the path to reconciliation. The leadership shown by the then Rudd Labor government was one of the reasons I joined the Labor Party. I first handed out how-to-vote cards when I was still in school in 2007 at the Nerang PCYC, which is in the electorate that I have the privilege of representing today. It is one of the reasons that I still stand here today.

Unfortunately the politics of hope over fear is in stark contrast to what we have seen under this supposedly new Crisafulli LNP government. As *Courier Mail* journalist Hayden Johnson so rightfully put, history will show this government's 'first act in power was one of political cruelty, free from the decency and respect we were told would be a cornerstone', axing in the middle of the night the Path to Treaty and Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry. I, like a lot of Queenslanders, genuinely thought that maybe Premier Crisafulli would be different from some of the conservative politicians I was used to seeing when I was growing up. I believed him when he said Path to Treaty offers a fork in the road.

**Mrs Gerber** interjected.

**Ms SCANLON:** I take the interjection of the member for Currumbin, who does not like listening to what is a really important issue for First Nations people. I will remind the member for Currumbin what the Premier said. He said that his word meant something, but clearly it means nothing.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Dr O'Shea): Could we not have so much noise and interjection because I cannot hear the speaker. Thank you.

**Ms SCANLON:** What he said was a Path to Treaty offers a 'fork in the road'—

**Ms Camm:** In 10 years what did you do?

**Ms SCANLON:** I take the interjection: what did we do? We introduced a Path to Treaty Bill that was axed in the middle of the night by the LNP.

**Ms Camm** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Whitsunday—

**Mr BUTCHER:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point order. It is convention in this place that speeches in the address-in-reply debate are to be heard in silence. If those opposite want to keep going, this is not setting a good precedent.

**Ms CAMM:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point order. I refute the member for Gladstone's position. There is no point of order because the member took my interjection.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** What we will do is we will continue the speech now. If we could just have order in the chamber, please.

**Ms SCANLON:** Those opposite have taken up a lot of time. I know they do not like hearing the words of the Premier, then opposition leader, who at the time supported the Path to Treaty and then got into government and backflipped.

**Government members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Again, I cannot hear the speaker. It is getting late. If we could just have order in the House so we can hear the speaker.

**Ms SCANLON:** What was so cold about this decision was the fact that there were 60 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people sitting in the gallery optimistic about Youth Parliament—only for their eyes to be filled with literal tears as Premier Crisafulli demonstrated that when he says something he means absolutely nothing. I will be doing everything in my power to hold this government to account and to remind Queenslanders that when they say things they mean nothing.

**Ms Camm** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Whitsunday, I will ask you to cease interjecting. If you interject again, I will have to put you on a warning.

**Ms SCANLON:** I want to thank the Gaven electorate for placing their trust in me to continue serving the community I grew up in and love. I want to acknowledge the expectation of those who voted for me—I do not take the responsibility lightly—and, for those who supported another political party, I promise my door will always be open.

As part of my role, I am deeply aware of the responsibility to make the world a better place for the next generation, particularly for women. I am acutely aware that little girls are watching—all of us. They are seeing what is possible and imagining their own futures. One of my favourite parts of this job is seeing little girls have the confidence to come up to me and tell me their views and see no real barrier in being in spaces where years ago they would not have been welcome. I am conscious though that just being in this space is not enough. It is speaking up for meaningful change on wage parity, an end to gender-based violence, improved health responses and reproductive health care.

Investing in the next generation is one of the most important things we can do—even on the sporting field. I am incredibly proud to have secured funding for some of the great local sporting clubs in my electorate including the Mudgeeraba Nerang & Districts Cricket Club, the Carrara Saints ALF Club, the Nerang Bulls Rugby Union Club and the Nerang Neighbourhood Centre.

**Mrs Gerber:** Thank you, Bianca Stone!

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Currumbin, can we have some decorum in the chamber, please.

**Ms SCANLON:** That is reflective of the arrogance of this government. I was able to secure a commitment that a re-elected Labor government—

**Mrs Gerber** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Currumbin, could I ask you to stop interjecting.

**Ms SCANLON:** I ask the member for Currumbin to listen to this next bit—where the LNP did not commit to a whole range of organisations in my electorate who need funding.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Gaven, could you direct your comments through the chair?

**Ms SCANLON:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. A re-elected Labor government had committed to upgrades to Nerang State High School, Nerang Eagles Football Club, Pacific Pines Football Club and Pacific Pines Netball Club. However, unfortunately, none of this was matched by the LNP, so I will continue to advocate for these clubs and schools to get the infrastructure they need to keep kids off the street and being active and healthy, because that is what this side of the House wants to do.

One of the other successes I am most proud of is securing funding for the On Demand Transport service, a service that has made a real difference to how people move around in our community. I will keep pushing to see it expanded to more suburbs including Carrara, Mount Nathan and Gaven.

As the only state Labor MP on the Gold Coast, I take incredibly seriously my responsibility to advocate for the infrastructure our growing city needs. That means ensuring the work that Labor started—the second M1, extending the light rail and the heavy rail to the airport, the Coomera Hospital and three new train stations—progresses. For too long the LNP have sat on fat margins and taken the Gold Coast for granted, so I know—

**Government members** interjected.

**Ms SCANLON:** We hear them laughing. They are taking for granted their fat margins already.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**Ms SCANLON:** This was a hard fought campaign. It is very clear that the LNP wanted to take the seat of Gaven. That was evidenced by the fact that on some days on pre-poll we had nearly all of the Gold Coast LNP MPs not in their own communities representing them but instead on my pre-poll trying to get rid of the one Labor MP. I suspect that was because they do not like any scrutiny. They just want to have the entire Gold Coast because they do not want any scrutiny. They want to be able to do nothing.

**Mrs Gerber** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Currumbin, you are on a warning now.

**Mr BUTCHER:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Members are aware that there is a convention during the address-reply debate that members should be heard in silence. Can I please ask you to address them—

**Mrs Gerber:** Maiden speech!

**Mr BUTCHER:** Address-in-reply.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Dr O'Shea): I will take some advice. I would like the speaker to resume her speech. Could I ask both sides of the House to be calm and quiet so we can hear the rest of the speech. We only have a few minutes to go.

**Ms SCANLON:** This was a campaign focused on the things that matter—50-cent fares, cost-of-living relief, protecting abortion rights, community safety, more hospital beds and bulk-billing clinics through to housing.

**A government member:** What about housing?

**Ms SCANLON:** I can hear those opposite talking about housing, so I am really pleased to talk about it. We took to the election our plan of building 53,500 social homes, reforming the planning system, building more affordable housing in well-located areas, supporting renters and first home buyers, working towards ending homelessness and setting bold and long-term targets that will hold legislators, including the LNP, to account beyond even my time in this parliament.

Queenslanders will be watching very carefully to ensure these measures we fought hard for are not cut. Unfortunately, we are starting to see some of those measures already being wound back. We have an anti-housing minister in charge who was promoted to the job after railing against affordable homes on a disused golf course in his own electorate. He was okay with a wave pool being built up the road but not okay with affordable housing in Arundel.

**Mr O'Connor** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Bonney, could I ask you to stop interjecting.

**Ms SCANLON:** In six months the LNP have axed 1,000 homes and there are more on the chopping block.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence. You cannot cut something without any funding. I ask the member to withdraw.

**Ms SCANLON:** I withdraw. I am happy to elaborate on the details on another point. Frankly, the housing minister has also kept secret the homelessness review. What we discovered last night is that, I suspect, the reason is that the member for Mermaid Beach is pulling the strings behind the scenes. He gave a speech last night about homeless people 'along the beachfront in prime public locations'—

**Mr O'Connor** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Bonney, could I ask you to stop interjecting.

**Ms SCANLON:** What was his response to those homeless people who are struggling in his electorate? It was not to call Housing and Homelessness Services. No. He said, 'My first call, of course, is to my local police station ...'. When they told him that the vagrancy act is no longer applicable criminalising homeless people, his response was: 'Oh, it's unacceptable.' He doubled down. He has concerns around the fact that police cannot move people on. He said that 'regardless of their mental competence', those people should still be moved on. That is the position of the LNP.

**Mr O'Connor:** Oh, come on.

**Ms SCANLON:** I take the groans from the housing minister. It is his own political party, so if he has some problems maybe he should go and talk to the member for Mermaid Beach who spent his entire speech in this parliament degrading homeless people in his community.

**Mr O'Connor:** That's not true.

**Ms SCANLON:** It is true, member for Bonney. It is true. You are just embarrassed because I would be too if I had a colleague like that.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Gaven, if you could address your remarks through the chair.

**Mr Minnikin:** It seems very bitter, doesn't it? Very bitter speech—very bitter, very angry speech.

**Ms SCANLON:** I take the interjection. It is an angry response because it is a pretty disgraceful comment made, and the member for Chatsworth thinks it is funny. He thinks it is funny that the member for Mermaid Beach wants to put homeless people in jail.

**Mr O'Connor** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Dr O'Shea): Member for Bonney, if you interject again, you will be on a warning.

**Ms SCANLON:** While the LNP sit on solutions Queenslanders are sleeping on the streets. They are right now sitting on a homelessness review that has a whole range of recommendations that homeless organisations contributed to and they are keeping it secret. They are also refusing to review the income thresholds of the Social Housing Register that have not been updated for 20 years. They are kicking people out, but they are refusing to acknowledge that the settings have not changed in 20 years.