




Speech By
Hon. Meaghan Scanlon

MEMBER FOR GAVEN

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ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (11.18 am), continuing: I know I would not be here without some incredible people. I will inevitably miss mentioning some of these people by name, but I want to express my deepest gratitude to all of the amazing volunteers who contributed their time and energy to our campaign. To those who showed up early in the mornings with signs, especially Barbara, Garry, Cheryl and Terry, their visibility made a difference from the very start of the day. To everyone who spent weekends doorknocking or made evening calls—people like Chris Deeks, Dominique, Feargal, Rachel, Holly, Raife, Jack, James, Keaden, Sophia, Kylie and so many more—thank you. They persevered through rain, hail and plenty of sun with dedication and enthusiasm. Campaign work is not always visible. Behind the scenes there were hours of letterboxing, stapling and packing backpacks and booth kits. I want to especially thank Robert, Barbara Deeks, Peter and Peter, Nik, Ann Bunnell and Deb. Every task mattered. Every teabag stapled to a card played its part.

This campaign was built on their passion, persistence and belief in what we were working towards. I acknowledge some volunteers who were not with us this campaign, in particular, Margaret Cox, Ib Dyhr and Bruce Doleman whom we sadly lost and who are missed by the Gaven Labor family. I thank Megan, Rhiannon and Brianna, regardless of what role they have taken on, who have always been there to help or provide sage and sometimes brutal advice and, of course, the incredible Kate Flanders. I acknowledge Luke who, no matter what, has always been there, right from the very start.

To Simone, Adrian and Kathy in my electorate office, thank you for everything you did throughout the term, listening to my sometimes unrealistic ideas. Thank you for your relentless dedication to the Labor cause and for your friendship. I thank my former ministerial team of Kobe, Alyssa, Tim, Sharyn, Naomi, Beth, Emma, Steph, Sheena, Francis and Robyn. In particular, I thank Clare Manton, who is an absolute star. She always has my back, is fiercely passionate about the cause and is smart, funny and, most importantly, a friend. I thank Nick Heath, who started as my chief of staff in the environment portfolio and whose experience and enthusiasm, particularly as I was a young minister, was invaluable. He helped me try to overcome the imposter syndrome that so many women, in particular, experience.

I acknowledge my family. I thank the crack team of aunts and uncles who have flown from Victoria to help out at every election, including this one. They grew up in a working-class area in Victoria. Six kids and two adults lived in a three-bedroom social housing home. Their stories and values have played a part in who I am and what I fight for here today.

Last, but certainly not least, I thank my mum and brother or, as he likes to be referred to, my favourite brother, despite the fact that I have no other siblings. Callum is fiercely competitive and protective of those he loves, and naturally those attributes came in very handy on pre-poll. Callum constantly reminds me of why I entered politics in the first place. He is a kind-hearted, funny and decent bloke but there are some challenging times. A lot has changed thanks to Labor initiatives such as the National Disability Insurance Scheme, but there is still a lot more to be done. I hope that having more favourite sisters in this House helps make the world a better place for Callum and his mates.

Finally, I thank my mum. For a part of our lives she raised us as a single parent and she made up for that absence with double the focus. Anyone who tried to cross her on the polling booth would know just how much she cares about not just my brother and I but also the broader Labor cause. I do not distinctly remember it but I am told that throughout my childhood mum took me to many union delegate meetings. She was a CPSU delegate and she very much instilled in me the importance of people standing up for workers' rights and conditions. I would not be here today without her strong values.

What Labor stands for matters. We took a whole range of really important matters to the election and, despite the result not being the one we wanted, we respect it. I thank the electorate of Gaven for putting their trust in me. The things that we took to the election really do matter. I was reminded of that most recently when I doorknocked in my community and met Cecile, a pensioner, and Jamie-Lee, a single mum, who really are relying on cost-of-living relief in this year's budget and in budgets to come. Only two weeks ago I met Liam, a nurse at the Gold Coast University Hospital. He and his colleagues deserve decent wages and conditions. I acknowledge the mighty union movement that played their role at the last state election in representing their members. I know the QNMU was on my polling booth, fighting for the right to fair wages and conditions that their members expect. In opposition, we will continue to fight for those people who did so much through COVID and continue to do to make sure that people are given the care that they deserve.

I said in my first speech that I come from a long line of working people, from my great-grandfather, who fought for better conditions following his coalminer father's battle with black lung, to my grandfather on my dad's side, who was an ETU shop steward during the infamous SEQEB dispute and whose disdain for Joh Bjelke-Petersen's autocratic style of government lives on in me today. It is one of the reasons this side of the House will continue to advocate for the need for the Fitzgerald inquiry measures to be implemented in full and not eroded, as we are starting to see in some of the decisions of this Crisafulli government. While the Gold Coast is seen as the glitter strip, I know where I have come from and I will continue to fight every day for the hardworking men and women of suburbs such as Nerang. They deserve a fair go.

I want to acknowledge some of the electorate staff who assisted in casual positions, although I have not written down all of their names. It was motivating to see so many young people get involved in this campaign. Some of them have gone on to work in the mighty Labor movement and the union movement. They really instilled energy into the campaign. I hope they continue in the Labor movement because we need them going forward to fight for the issues that we all believe in.