



Speech By  
**Stephen Bennett**

**MEMBER FOR BURNETT**

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Record of Proceedings, 16 September 2025

**MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**BUSHkids, 90th Anniversary**

**Opposition members** interjected.



**Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (2.44 pm): I have the mic.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr McDonald): Members, order!

**Mr BENNETT:** What a privilege it is to stand and talk about the 90th anniversary of BUSHkids that will be celebrated this year. In 2025 the Royal Queensland Bush Children's Health Scheme, better known as BUSHkids, celebrates an extraordinary milestone—90 years of dedicated service to Queensland children and families.

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Logan, you are warned.

**Mr BENNETT:** Since 1935 this not-for-profit organisation has been at the forefront delivering free essential services to children and families in regional, rural and remote communities. Over nine decades, more than 90,000 children and their families have been supported—a remarkable legacy of care, commitment and unwavering education. Today BUSHkids has grown to a staff of 180, delivering more than 500 services every week. Last year alone, 9,000 children were supported with life-changing services—living proof of the BUSHkids vision that all Queensland children should have the opportunity to reach their full potential no matter where they live. None of this would be possible without the extraordinary people who make up the BUSHkids family—passionate staff and a tireless and committed group of volunteers. Back home, in the Bundaberg and Burnett areas, I want to give a special shout-out to Judy Peters, Scott Lamond and the incredible Friends of BUSHkids for their energy, dedication and unwavering support that keeps this mission alive in our community.

Last week in the Bundaberg area we had the privilege of hosting the very first screening of *Seen—The Film*, as part of BUSHkids' 90th anniversary roadshow. Hundreds of people packed the Moncrieff theatre, showing overwhelming support for this important initiative. The evening was brilliantly hosted by long-term BUSHkids advocate Scott Lamond. We heard powerful reflections from our community champions, including Judy Peters and Pastor Richard Cathie, highlighting why supporting parents is so critical to making our families stronger.

The documentary itself is deeply moving. It highlights the importance of parents looking after their own wellbeing and the profound, lasting benefits this has for children, families and entire communities. I want to personally acknowledge CEO Carlton Meyn and his dedicated team for leading this project and, once again, the Friends of BUSHkids Bundaberg and all supporters for making the evening such a tremendous success. Bundaberg was the first community to celebrate BUSHkids' 90th anniversary with a screening of *Seen*. More events are planned across regional Queensland in the coming months as the roadshow continues, so be sure to keep an eye out for dates and locations. With the indulgence

of the House, I ask members to please promote these events within their communities. I am sure their communities will be better for the viewing of this wonderful movie.

BUSHkids' 90th year is about not only celebrating the past but also building the future. From the new telepractice centre in Toowong, named to support the ongoing reconciliation action plan, to the soon-to-be-released model of care, this organisation continues to innovate, expand and ensure no child in Queensland is left behind. BUSHkids demonstrates the power of mission-driven teams, strong community partnerships and meaningful collaboration with governments, universities and other organisations. Their work is a reminder that supporting children and families is not just a job; it is a responsibility shared by all of us. From its beginnings under Governor Sir Leslie Wilson in 1935 to now celebrating 90 years under the patronage of Her Excellency the Governor of Queensland, BUSHkids has always stood for one simple truth: every child matters. Let us celebrate this proud legacy and support their future and continue to ensure that BUSHkids can do what it does best: giving every child, no matter where they live, the chance to thrive.

In closing, I give a shout-out to everyone who participated in the football match last night. It is great to see that, with everyone's participation, \$11,000 was raised for BUSHkids. Thank you to the member for Chatsworth and all of the other members from all sides of politics.

**Mr Crandon:** And the photographer!

**Mr BENNETT:** I heard he took some 300 photographs! I thank Football Queensland for making Perry Park available for this great event. I was unable to join you last night, but I give a shout-out to all who put so much in to support such a great organisation.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Burnett, for your advocacy for that group.