




Speech By
Terry James

MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE

Record of Proceedings, 1 May 2025

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Pitt, Hon. W, AM

 **Mr JAMES** (Mulgrave—LNP) (9.40 am): I first met Warren when I entered politics as a young alderman at Cairns city council back in 1994 when he was the minister for industry and regional development under then premier Wayne Goss. It was not until my second stint at council, after the amalgamation of Mulgrave shire and Cairns city to form Cairns Regional Council, that I got to know Warren Pitt. We attended several events together where he and his wife, Linda, were always present. At one of these events I discovered through our conversations that I am related to Linda, so the electorate of Mulgrave is still in the family.

Warren Pitt was an all-round, well-respected person, teacher, sportsperson and community leader with values above partisan lines. Born in Cairns in 1948, Warren excelled in sport at high school and in his senior year he was district athletic champion. He completed two bachelor's degrees and one master's degree as well as his Army national service obligations.

Warren and Linda married in Charters Towers in 1970 and moved to Gordonvale that same year. His first teaching job in Gordonvale was at Gordonvale State School and he then spent 25 years teaching at both Gordonvale State School and Gordonvale State High School. He was a great supporter of junior sports and community events. Warren and Linda opened a sports store called SportsFit in Norman Street, Gordonvale in the late 1980s. As well as selling to the public, they supplied equipment to local clubs they were involved in, offering them considerable discounts. They ran this business for almost 10 years.

Warren and Linda founded and wrote constitutions for Southern Suburbs Junior Rugby League Club, Gordonvale Netball Association, Johnson Park Development Association, Mulgrave Little Athletics Club, Mulgrave Junior Cricket Club, Sunbird Lodge palliative care, Gordonvale Vigoro, Mulgrave District Chamber of Commerce and Mulgrave educational tours. Together, they were made life members of almost every organisation they were involved in.

Warren played Rugby League and cricket and was also a champion welterweight boxer. He was the member for Mulgrave from 1989 to 1995 and from 1998 until 2009, when he retired due to ill health. He was a business, industry and regional development minister and was minister for communities and disability services, seniors and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, main roads and local government. Warren spearheaded and funded construction and completion of many local landmarks such as the Desmond Trannore Bridge over the Mulgrave River, Babinda bypass, Gillies Range upgrade, establishment of Bentley Park College, Gordonvale State School sports hall and upgrade of Gordonvale and Innisfail hospitals to name a few.

He was awarded Mulgrave Shire Citizen of the Year in 1983 and was awarded an Order of Australia AM by the Governor-General for community volunteer work and political services in 2016. Warren Pitt's contribution to this state, in particular to the electorate of Mulgrave and its people, will be remembered for many years. In fact, in a fitting tribute, part of the Bruce Highway from Gordonvale to Cairns was renamed the Warren and Linda Pitt Way.