



Speech By
Hon. Amanda Camm

MEMBER FOR WHITSUNDAY

Record of Proceedings, 3 March 2026

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Bird, Ms LR

 **Hon. AJ CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (9.43 am): I rise to contribute to the condolence motion and to express my sorrow to John and the family on the passing of his wife, a former member for Whitsunday—Lorraine Rita Bird. I do so wearing trousers today as a nod to Lorraine, who in 1990, after receiving permission from the Speaker, became the first female MP to wear trousers in the Queensland parliament. It may not seem much but it was another step, as outlined by the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition, on the road for women in this House. Today we mark over 100 women who have been elected to parliament—and what a fitting week in which to deliver her condolence motion, with International Women’s Day occurring this week.

Ms Bird spoke of being immensely proud of being a female representative in this House and for our community and was a fierce advocate for women’s rights right across the great state of Queensland. This morning I spoke with John, who is well recognised across the Mackay community as an established accountant in the partnership that was Brown and Bird, which delivered a lot of not-for-profit support right across our community as well with their auditing functions, so I acknowledge him today. He expressed to me her passion for our local community. Back then the seat of Whitsunday was a much bigger electorate, taking in parts of the Mackay electorate and also the Burdekin electorate. It was bigger than the electorate I represent today. Her advocacy for the Bruce Highway, her continued advocacy for the tourism and sugar industries—and she predicted that the tourism industry would employ greater numbers than the sugar industry into the future, and I think it probably does now—and her delivery of community health services in Airlie Beach are a legacy that she has left.

In her first address in this House she touched on just what it means to be a North Queenslander, especially one who calls the Whitsunday region home. She said—

We are a mixed bag to say the least, but this makes us so much more ready to grasp the new opportunities that these uncertain times present, to take the risks of venturing new fields and to endure the inevitable hard times. We are people who have learnt from the past that there are no easy solutions and that we must all make a positive contribution if the community as a whole is to prosper.

I think all of us enter this House with that vision for and representation of our electorates in mind.

Ms Bird was a lover of the arts and advocated for the region that she called home. She spoke of the beauty and the need to take great care of the environment and our natural beauty but also the people. Her contribution to the arts and her feminist views were expressed in this House when debating the Classification of Films Amendment Bill in 1993, when she spoke of how women and their roles were misrepresented by the media and filmmakers and that there was a lack of opportunity for substantial roles for women and the impact that was having on children and the next generation. That was not too long ago—back in 1993. I think I was in year 10 then.

I want to thank Ms Bird's family, particularly John and her children, for giving up their mum and their wife in the time that she served this parliament. It is more challenging for regional members in this House not just when they leave for Brisbane but also when they have to travel across their electorate and be away from their family. The sacrifice that she has made I know lives through her children and grandchildren. Vale, Lorraine Bird.