




Speech By
Christopher Whiting

MEMBER FOR BANCROFT

Record of Proceedings, 4 March 2026

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Hollis, Mr RK

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (2.15 pm): I rise to contribute to this condolence motion for Ray Hollis, the former member for Redcliffe and former Speaker of the Queensland parliament. I associate myself with those condolence remarks that have been made so far. I also acknowledge Ju Fen, his children and grandchildren, friends and other family with us today.

I first met Ray when he was the member for Redcliffe about 25 years ago when I was a brash young councillor for the Deception Bay area. When he asked me to work on local projects with him in the area, including the Red Shield Appeal, the answer could only be a yes due to the way he asked. I always found him to be courteous and a gentleman and he was always respectful. I always sensed his decorum and dignity and I always saw his genuine dedication to the people of Redcliffe as well as his genuine love for them.

I did not know him as well as the Hon. Dean Wells, my Labor predecessor as the member for Murrumba. Dean is a Labor legend—a former federal member for Petrie, a former state member for Murrumba and attorney-general in the Goss government who guided us through those legal reforms at the time. Dean is with us today—or he will be with us—in the gallery. I spoke to Dean about Ray as they served in neighbouring seats and worked closely together. I asked him what he remembers most about Ray. Dean said that few Speakers of this House have made as significant an impact on parliamentary life as Ray did, and he did it with just one decision that he made shortly after taking the Speaker's chair. Until Ray's time, members of this House had the letters MLA after their name and often their constituents did not know what those letters meant. Ray changed that with a stroke of the pen. Since his time as Speaker, members of this House have been called MPs.

Dean also said that Ray would be seen at everything on the peninsula that opens and shuts. People often speak of Ray's friendly smile and his cooperative approach to every problem. Ray worked on the assumption that every project undertaken for the benefit of the people of the peninsula was going to succeed and was going to be a shared endeavour.

Ray was born in East London; he was a cockney and was actually born within hearing of Bow Bells. Growing up during his early years in the immediate postwar era, even though they lived in London he and his young mates had plenty of open spaces to play cricket and other games. The German bombers had seen to that, and it was not until many years later that they learned there were many unexploded bombs buried beneath their playgrounds. Many people did not even notice that Ray was English by birth. Ray used to say that the East End accent is more like the Australian accent than any other because so many of the convicts came from there.

Dean further said that Ray was his friend and colleague. They worked together on many projects for the people of the Redcliffe peninsula. Dean told me of one night shortly after Ray was elected Speaker when a division had just been called. He took the opportunity while the bells were ringing to approach the Speaker's chair to talk to Ray about one of their joint projects. Dean began by saying,

'Well, Ray, it's a long way from hearing the great bell of Bow to ordering division bells to ring in the Queensland parliament.' Ray smiled and replied, 'Yes, but it has been a very worthwhile journey.' The life of Ray Hollis was indeed a very worthwhile journey. Vale, Ray Hollis.