




Speech By
David Lee

MEMBER FOR HERVEY BAY

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT, SMALL BUSINESS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE COMMITTEE; REPORT, MOTION TO TAKE NOTE

 **Mr LEE** (Hervey Bay—LNP) (3.32 pm): I rise to speak to the 58th Parliament committee inquiry into volunteering in Queensland. I am pleased to be part of a Crisafulli government that recognises the enduring value of volunteers in our community. Dr Martin Luther King once said—

Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'

It is an insightful question, and the answer to that deep and probing question is clearly and tirelessly articulated in my Hervey Bay community. Mahatma Gandhi expressed a similar sentiment in saying that the best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others. It is well documented that volunteering is good for your mental, social and physical wellbeing. Indeed, it is good for the soul. Volunteering gets people out of the house and into the community engaging and building relationships. Volunteering builds social capital. According to the 2024 state of volunteering in Queensland report, in 2023 volunteering in Queensland contributed \$117.8 billion into our economy. Volunteering in Hervey Bay is strong, well established and intergenerational. Hervey Bay is a generous and charitable community and we have many Hervey Bay volunteers—young and older—who are the very embodiment of Martin Luther King's adage of doing for others. What a shame that Labor members are using politics today when they could take the opportunity to praise the efforts of volunteers in their communities.

Today in the short time available it is impossible for me to exhaustively canvass all of the Hervey Bay volunteer organisations and individuals who selflessly and tirelessly serve our Hervey Bay community, so here is a broad glimpse. With regard to the homeless, Toby Robinson—2024 and 2026 Young Citizen of the Year at just 14 years of age—has been integral to the success of the ZBus program. These are buses with private and secure sleep pods for the homeless. We also have J&T Supporting Homeless, Kindness Works and We Care 2 organisations that regularly provide food and support for the vulnerable in our community. They provide that five days a week, with some support over the weekends, and do a fantastic job in supporting the homeless. The We Care 2 movement also provides a food bank and for many years has provided invaluable support to the homeless and vulnerable in our community.

In terms of palliative care, we have the Fraser Coast Hospice association—a great organisation—and I was privileged to be on the board when establishing the hospice association. It provides free-of-charge end-of-life care to the terminally ill in our community. Since the doors were opened just three years ago, this service has provided amazingly comprehensive end-of-life care to over 600 clients and their families. Bernie Whebell—2026 Citizen of the Year—is the former Hervey Bay Neighbourhood Centre president who guided the organisation with integrity, vision and compassion. The Hervey Bay Neighbourhood Centre is recognised as the model neighbourhood centre throughout Queensland. It does a fantastic job in supporting the vulnerable in our community. Then we have Rally for a Cause.

Founded on the Fraser Coast in 2015, this organisation has raised over \$5 million through Dunga Derby to support families facing life-limiting medical conditions. My good friend Elaine Gamer OAM has given 43 years of service through the Leukaemia Foundation. She fulfilled her 15-year-old daughter's dying wish, which was to help others with leukaemia.

In sport and recreation we have the Hervey Bay Girl Guides. They do a fantastic job supporting young girls in girl guiding, and I have been privileged to be associated with that organisation now for a number of years. I congratulate them on their successful grant for solar panels. We also have All Abilities Futsal, which participated in nationals in Malaysia, Hervey Bay Seagulls rugby league, Veterans of Australia, Hervey Bay Zonta Club and Hervey Bay View Club. In closing, our Hervey Bay volunteers give immeasurable economic and social value to our community. Our Hervey Bay volunteers are incrementally and cumulatively building social capital. Today I pay tribute to our hardworking volunteers in Hervey Bay.