

Speech By

Wendy Bourne

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH WEST

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ADJOURNMENT

Rugby League, Ipswich Jets

Ms BOURNE (Ipswich West—ALP) (9.21 pm): You cannot tell the story of rugby league in Queensland without talking about Ipswich. For generations, our region has produced some of the greatest names in the game, and that tradition continues every weekend across our local clubs and schools. We saw it again on Sunday at Harrisville, where the Norths Tigers claimed the 2026 Rugby League Ipswich A-grade Grand Final in a nailbiting 17-16 victory over Fassifern. Rugby league is part of who we are in Ipswich.

For decades, the Ipswich Jets have developed local talent, created pathways into the professional game and given generations of supporters a team they are proud to call their own. That is why Ipswich deserves to be taken seriously in the bid for the NRL's 20th licence. I have written to the NRL and I have also written to the Premier who, disappointingly, has not responded. Through a question on notice I asked whether the government had considered Ipswich for the NRL's 20th licence. Rather than backing our region, the response was to sit on the fence. I do not believe that is good enough. Ipswich has earned the right to be the champions. We deserve a government willing to fight for Ipswich and our future.

I urge the government to back the proven talent and commitment we have here in Ipswich. We have the history, the pathways, the supporters and the population growth. What we need is the investment to match the ambition. The $40 million western grandstand redevelopment at North Ipswich Reserve is a welcome investment in our city, funded through contributions from the Australian government, the former Labor government and Ipswich City Council. It recognises Ipswich's enormous contribution to rugby league but, after generations of producing talent, growing the game and backing our clubs, our region deserves continued support that matches our ambition.

The western grandstand is an important step forward, but it cannot be the end of the conversation. If Ipswich is to secure its place in the future of rugby league, our region needs a government willing to keep backing that ambition. While we push for Ipswich's place at the highest level of the game, we also need to keep supporting the next generation coming through our local clubs. That is why I welcome the continuation of FairPlay vouchers, introduced by the former Labor government to help families with the cost of community sport. Ipswich has given a lot to this game and we have plenty more to give, so I want to see the Queensland government get behind our region, back the Jets and help make the case for Ipswich to be part of the NRL's future. Go the Jets!