



Speech by

**CAROLYN MALE**

**MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE**

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Hansard 4 April 2001

**FIRST SPEECH**

**Ms MALE** (Glass House—ALP) (4.20 p.m.): Mr Deputy Speaker, I offer my sincere congratulations on your election to the position of Deputy Speaker and ask that you pass on my congratulations to the Speaker. I look forward to working with you both to ensure that high standards prevail in the 50th Parliament of Queensland.

To be elected to parliament as the representative of the people of Glass House is a great honour and privilege, one which I take seriously. I will represent my electors faithfully and diligently and let them know that it is their commitment to this area which inspires me to be the best representative they have ever had.

At the outset, I would like to thank the hardworking members and supporters of the Australian Labor Party whose work was crucial in helping me to win the seat of Glass House for Labor. My thanks go to Stephen Beckett for his tireless work in the dual roles of my campaign manager and federal candidate for the seat of Longman. We have worked together as a team for the past two years, and no-one could have done a finer job. Thanks also to Peter Boyd, Clyde Ford, Ann Penny, Jim and Carolyn Duncan, Stephen Schmidt, George Hadgkiss—who is one of our life members—Bob and Jenny Scott and all my Caboolture 'branchies', Gillian Pechey and Ed Gordon and all the Sunshine Coast Hinterland 'branchies' and supporters as well.

To the many people who helped letterboxing, staffing the campaign office, the booths and prepolls, people who also offered advice, comfort and camaraderie—thank you. There is nothing quite like a Labor campaign in full swing.

Can I also say that the members from the surrounding electorates have provided enormous help and advice. I am sure we will all be working closely together to ensure the best for our electorates as a whole—specifically Carryn Sullivan in Pumicestone, Ken Hayward in Kallangur, Dean Wells in Murrumba and Linda Lavarch in Kurwongbah.

Thanks also to my many and varied organisers—Di Farmer, Milton Dick, Lindsay Jones and Cameron Milner. Also to the experienced campaigners like Ann and Ken, Ross, Carmen, Ken, and the two Matts—that is Big Matt and Little Matt.

I would not be here today without the support of Labor Forum and its members. Paul Lucas believed in me from the word go and I am grateful for his advice and assistance. To the many union members who supported me through word and deed, I say to you: thank you. This is a victory for all the workers of Glass House and I will represent them well.

I also thank the members of the organisation Emily's List, who have been of tremendous assistance. This is an organisation that provides a range of practical support mechanisms to female candidates, including invaluable advice on campaigning, innovative campaign techniques, financial support and the all-important personal support. Not only did I have the delightful, experienced and talented Rosemary Hume as my mentor, but Joan Kirner took time out of her busy schedule to give me a weekly pep talk. Their support was well and truly appreciated.

Thanks to my family—to my wonderful husband, Bill Ferguson, who is in the public gallery today. Bill has always given me his complete support, confidence and love. Bill has always referred to himself as the candidate's handbag, but I can assure this House that he did much more than just carry my

personal effects. Bill's complete and utter belief in my ability to be the local member, his excellent advice, his superb political judgment and his large capacity for knowing the right thing to do and say at any given time is unrivalled.

To my two beautiful daughters, Jordan and Jetta, who provide the love, laughter and complete cuteness which lifts my day. My brothers and sister, some of who were the original Glass House Young Labor team way back when—thank you for believing in me and thank you for again supporting Labor.

I thank my parents, Jim and Joan Male, who have always encouraged me to be the best I can be. As long-time activists and advocates, my parents have always insisted that their children should be encouraged to discuss their ideas and opinions—and with six children, I can tell members that ours was one very noisy dinner table. It was to my eternal pleasure that dad took up the challenge during the election campaign to be the most reliable worker in my campaign office. He was there from early in the morning till late in the day answering phones, talking to people, dealing with issues and making sure that I had something to eat at least once a day—even to the point of sharing his favourite cold spaghetti sandwiches.

My mother took control of the home front during the campaign and, as always, without her help and support I would be lost. My mother has always been the solid rock of my life and has provided me with the skills and encouragement, not to mention the values and beliefs, to be a hardworking member of my community.

As members know, the seat of Glass House is one of two new seats created in the 1999 redistribution by the Electoral Commission of Queensland. It is indeed a great honour to be the first representative of this new seat. I would like to take some time to explain the make-up of Glass House and some of its outstanding features.

The community I represent in Glass House is drawn from a large geographic area—from the communities of central Caboolture, Tullawong and Bellmere, stretching out west to the towns of Wamuran and D'Aguilar, going north to Elimbah, my home town of Beerburrum, Glasshouse Mountains, Beerwah, Landsborough, Mooloolah and Glenview at its most northern extremity. Going west from these centres, Glass House encompasses the communities of Peachester, Mount Mellum, Maleny, Witta, Reesville, Conondale and stops just short of Kenilworth. Some people call it a large electorate; I just call it scenic. I would go so far as to say that Glass House represents a microcosm of Queensland. It has the high density, high growth urban aspects of Caboolture coupled with the smaller, more isolated aspects of the rural townships and properties.

Being totally unbiased, I would like to say that Glass House is the most picturesque and vibrant electorate in Queensland. We have the mountains after which the seat is named, the amazing rainforests and natural environment, a rich history that includes our Aboriginal heritage and the earliest periods of European settlement and undoubtedly our best asset—the people of Glass House—who come from all walks of life and add their own unique qualities to the seat. I should know—I have lived in Glass House almost my entire life, growing up on a farm at Beerburrum, attending local schools and living the same life as the people there.

Glass House boasts some of Queensland's most fertile agricultural and farming lands which support a diverse range of primary industries from pineapples, chokos, strawberries, avocados and other crops to dairy and beef farming, egg production and timber. Each town has its own unique characteristics governed by its location and infrastructure. It is pleasing to me to see the diversity within Glass House and also the fierce loyalty people have to their own towns.

I would like to take a moment to review the election result and what it means for the people of Glass House. Straight after the redistribution in 1999, I was preselected by the Labor Party unopposed and I have been campaigning for more than two years now. From the outset I knew it would be a difficult seat to win for the Labor Party. Looking at previous election results and traditional voting patterns, it should have been considered a safe National Party seat. Indeed, the National Party candidate kept telling everyone it was!

However, over the past few years the political landscape has changed dramatically and the traditional conservative vote has been especially fractured. I had always considered Glass House to be a signature seat for the 2001 election. If there was going to be change in the mood of the general public, it was going to be felt first in the living rooms of Caboolture, the farming blocks of the Glasshouse Mountains and the coffee shops and cooperative businesses of Maleny.

As it turned out, the mood was so strong across the whole of Queensland that Glass House was one of a whole raft of seats which was swept along by the Labor tide. On the primary vote, Labor came first with over 40 per cent, followed by One Nation on just over 20 per cent, followed by the Nationals, Liberals, Greens and the City Country Alliance. For the first time ever, Labor won every single booth. The result in Glass House primarily showed two things. The first was that a lot of people voted Labor for the first time in their lives—and this was reflected in the statewide result—and, secondly, that there is still a section of the community that is disenchanted with the political process.

As I said before, Glass House would have been considered a National Party seat in years gone by and the 20 per cent vote for One Nation should be of great concern to the Nationals, as it is of great concern to me. However, my job over the next three years is to show those electors who voted One Nation or CCA that good, strong representation by a Labor member can produce positive outcomes. I will ensure that all voices are heard.

For some electors, nothing can solve all their issues, but it is my job to represent them to the best of my ability and I will strive to do that over the next three years. From my doorknocking, I knew there was going to be a large One Nation vote. When I questioned people on why they were voting that way, they invariably said, 'One Nation is saying the things I believe in.' When I questioned them further on One Nation policy and how they were going to fix the problems identified, people invariably could not answer. Unfortunately, that is the problem with One Nation: they have identified problems but do not have the solutions.

Once you get past the One Nation rhetoric, there is very little substance to their policies, except some reminiscing about returning to the supposedly good old days of the 1950s—the days of repressed and isolated women, the days of the White Australia Policy and the days when indigenous people were treated like second-class citizens and not even afforded the right to vote.

I am part of a government and a party that has the policies and direction to deliver real outcomes for Queensland. Thankfully, an overwhelming majority of Queenslanders believe that, too. In Glass House, almost 60 per cent of people believe the Beattie government has the right agenda to meet their needs. I intend to reward the faith they have put in me and the Beattie Labor government because I passionately believe in getting real outcomes for people.

This brings me to the issues that are affecting people in my local area. As I have said, many of the issues that were in play over the past few years were raised with me during my doorknocking and information stalls. One message that came through loud and clear was that people are sick and tired of uncaring, exclusive governments like the current Howard coalition government. If I wanted to set people talking, I had only to mention petrol prices, the GST, business activity statements or simply say two words—'John Howard'. I know these are not state issues, but invariably people would say, 'Peter Beattie is doing a great job but that Johnny Howard had better watch out at the next election.'

People want a return to inclusive governments—ones that are willing to listen and act in the best interests of the whole community. I believe that the Beattie Labor government had done that in its first term and it was rewarded handsomely at the 17 February poll. I believe a key to that was the very successful community cabinet program throughout the state. During the Beattie Labor government's first term, there were three community cabinets in the Glass House electorate: one at Caboolture, one at Beerwah-Landsborough and one at Maleny. This allowed the people to meet face to face with ministers and their key advisers. It made the political process more open and more real for people, but more importantly produced results in our towns and in regional Queensland.

I have adopted a similar approach in Glass House—admittedly on a smaller scale. I am continuing my mobile office program by regularly going to each town and meeting with people. Every week or so I pack up my car with a folding table, chairs, pens, paper, mobile phone—which works in only some of the towns—and possibly most importantly myself and travel to several towns. I advertise the locations of my mobile office in advance so people know where to find me. They know that I am easily accessible and will represent them on all issues.

Since Glass House is such a diverse area, the range of issues is equally diverse and in some areas one issue may be important but it may barely rate a mention in another part. For instance, crime is an important issue in Caboolture and Beerwah. Certainly, the new police station at Beerwah has lessened people's concerns about crime in the area but more work and greater cooperation between police and community is needed to fix some of the crime problems there. In Caboolture, I will be continuing to fight for a police beat in the central Caboolture-Tullawong area and more resources for the police, while at the same time supporting the Neighbourhood Watch network in the entire Glass House electorate. The Landsborough Police Station is in need of an upgrade and I will be working with Police Minister McGrady to achieve that.

The size of Glass House means that transport and main roads are always hot issues, especially the availability of public transport. Progressing the northern bypass, upgrading the rail system, better bus services, improving the Glass House Mountains Road and identifying long-term solutions for the Landsborough-Maleny Road will be priorities for this term. I was able to achieve a successful result for pedestrian access at the intersection of Glass House Mountains Road at Landsborough, and it was a good example of the community and the state government working together. I would like to thank Transport Minister Steve Bredhauer for his personal involvement in this issue and look forward to working with him in the future.

While the transport facilities between Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast hinterland towns are improving and will continue to improve, public transport opportunities in the opposite direction are not

good. Public transport access from Landsborough, Maleny, Mooloolah and Glenview to Caloundra and other Sunshine Coast centres was an issue raised with me, and I will work with the Caloundra City Council and Queensland Transport to improve access to the coast and to Nambour.

In Caboolture, Beerwah and Maleny, youth and family issues have been raised with me on numerous occasions and, in particular, the shortage of respite care and emergency accommodation. I have spoken with Ministers Foley and Spence regarding these issues and will continue to push for improved resources.

The one state government service that is available in all Glass House centres, no matter how small or far flung they are, is education. I was able to secure improved facilities for state schools at Beerburrum and Maleny when I was a candidate and I will redouble my efforts to gain extra resources for our schools. As a former schoolteacher, I know how important good-quality facilities and resources are to ensure our children can successfully complete their education and have every opportunity to gain a job.

Unemployment is still too high in Caboolture and the Sunshine Coast hinterland and I will be encouraging the Beattie Labor government not only to direct job-creating projects to my area but also to improve training and apprenticeship opportunities. Local job creation is an area that needs more work, and with the Beattie government's emphasis on jobs, jobs, jobs we will be continuing with the new initiatives and continue the focus on creating jobs through traineeships and apprenticeships for all our local people.

Caboolture and the hinterland have tended to be overlooked, with the focus being placed on other regional centres and the Sunshine Coast. Infrastructure has not necessarily kept pace with the increasing population. Tourism is an important industry throughout the Glass House electorate, and we need to ensure that money is available to promote the many and varied natural, cultural and family attractions that are in the two shires.

When I was the candidate, I think most ministers and ministerial office staff would acknowledge my persistence in raising issues with them. They can expect to hear a lot more from me, because as the member for Glass House I intend to put the government's focus back on the electorate of Glass House. My determination and resolve to improve services for Glass House has hardened over the past two years. Departmental heads in my area may end up cursing my name, but one thing will be certain: they will be delivering better health, education, family, youth, employment, police and transport services to the people of Glass House by the end of this term. If they have not improved, then I would have failed in my duty to the people who elected me and put their faith in me. I do not intend to fail.

If it sounds like I am putting the government and public officials on notice, then so be it. It is our job, after all, to improve the lives of all Queenslanders, especially the people of Glass House. The start of a new century—indeed a new millennium—is our opportunity to put past disappointments and divisions behind and work towards a common goal. I do not intend to let that opportunity pass me by.

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