



Speech By  
**Sid Cramp**

**MEMBER FOR GAVEN**

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Record of Proceedings, 19 May 2015

### MAIDEN SPEECH

 **Mr CRAMP** (Gaven—LNP) (2.40 pm): I pass on my congratulations to the Speaker on his appointment as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly for the 55th Parliament of Queensland and I also congratulate you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I recognise all members of this Assembly for their success in the 2015 state election. In writing this speech, I was informed by several of my peers that it is my opportunity to define my time as a member of this chamber. If that is the case, then I will be my true self: I will wear my heart on my sleeve and I will never apologise for being passionate. I will always strive to work hard for others and I will seek to provide representation and assistance for those in our community who need it most.

I have come from humble beginnings. When I was five years old, my father passed away in an accident and, due to my father being our family's only source of income, we lost everything. Moving into and growing up in a small public housing residence with five siblings and a single mother was not always easy. On many occasions we needed assistance just to eat and be clothed, so I understand the struggle of poverty and can relate to all in our communities, regardless of socioeconomic circumstance. I represent the fact that one can start at nothing and achieve all that they strive for. Like many people, especially in my earlier years I hoped for more, thinking that possibly life could have been better, but the reality is that I could have also experienced a lot worse. I learned that it is not enough to simply hope for more; in this life, to achieve your dreams or even just improve your circumstances effort is required. Reward for effort is a simple concept, but it is a concept that is wholeheartedly embraced by the great political party that I am proudly a member of.

I am truly thankful for the experiences I have had throughout my life, as they have helped to define me as a person. Most importantly, they have brought me to my beautiful wife, Danielle. Danielle, every day I am thankful for your love and friendship. You are the first person I spoke with about entering political life and, as always, you immediately gave me your unwavering support. Your advice to me that I am never happy unless I am crusading for others convinced me that I should take this path. All that we have achieved in life we have achieved together and this journey will be no different. To our three beautiful children, Isabella, Luca and Ariana: you never to cease to amaze your mother and I with all that you do. We love you and always are so proud of you. If I can teach you anything in this world, it will be that there is no limit to what you can achieve if you are willing to work hard and never, ever give up.

Danielle and I have built our family home in the Gaven electorate because it has a strong sense of community and a relaxed family-friendly environment in which to raise our children. I know that my Gold Coast LNP team will attest to this without hesitation: Gaven is by far the most picturesque and beautiful part of the Gold Coast, and I thank them for that. In the south, the Gaven electorate includes Highland Park with its incredible views of the coast and skyline; Nerang, the Gold Coast's first major township, which started it all for the coast; and the leafy suburb of Gilston. Centrally, the electorate takes in the semirural suburb of Gaven, the electorate's namesake; and Carrara, the home of the mighty Gold Coast Suns and, of course, the Commonwealth Games or, as we prefer to call it, the

Gaven games, but you are all still invited. The northern area of the electorate takes in parts of Molendinar, which has some of the Gold Coast's most dynamic and expanding industrial enterprises; Pacific Pines, which has seen continuous growth due to its fantastic family lifestyle and vibrant community; and semirural Maudsland, with its amazing views of the hinterland and mountains. Along the western border of the electorate, the suburbs of Mount Nathan and Guanaba and parts of Wongawallan and Clagiraba contain some of the most picturesque residential areas on the Gold Coast and are the gateway to the northern end of the Gold Coast hinterland and the beautiful Scenic Rim.

My family is not alone in understanding how great the Gaven electorate is, resulting in a continual population increase in our community which does not come without issues. Gaven is experiencing growing pains with more community infrastructure required, including sports facilities, roads and public transport. I will continue to work hard and focus on those areas to ensure Gaven receives the facilities and infrastructure it requires to continue to grow and develop. Gaven is definitely a proud small-business community. I will fight to ensure that all businesses in the Gaven electorate have the right conditions to allow them to prosper. In the Gaven electorate, business owners really are community heroes. They work locally, live locally, employ other locals and sponsor our local sporting and community organisations. I will seek to maintain a real understanding of and strong relationship with local businesses to enable them to thrive and create employment opportunities, especially for Gaven's young people.

I know the value of teamwork and have a true love of the democracy that we are so privileged to live in. For the Gaven electorate to grow and prosper, I understand it will require the input of many, including all levels of government. In this respect I have been very fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with two strong leaders at both local and federal levels: Gold Coast City Mayor Tom Tate, whose willingness to work in partnership with me for the betterment of the Gaven electorate has been exceptional; and the Hon. Steven Ciobo, parliamentary secretary for foreign affairs and trade and federal member for Moncrieff, who is in the gallery today. Steven, from the moment I decided to stand up for Gaven you have been steadfast in your support. The time you take to provide advice and assistance is always valued and I look forward to building our working relationship as we serve our shared communities within the Gaven and Moncrieff electorates.

As a local resident, I speak with many fellow locals who want ours to be a safe community for all. A safe community is a connected community. Therefore, I am promoting and supporting grassroots organisations such as Neighbourhood Watch and Crime Stoppers, which are willing to stand up against crime. During my brief time in this chamber, I have listened with pride to fellow members of this LNP team speak about the tough stance taken on crime by the previous Newman LNP government. The increase of police numbers on the Gold Coast, the creation of rapid action patrols and, notably, the introduction of tough new laws have combined to stop criminal bkie gangs from terrorising our neighbourhoods. Unfortunately, the Gaven electorate was home to several bkie gang clubhouses. As a result of the strong LNP government, supporting the hard work of our Police Service, our community saw those criminal organisations close their clubhouses and, thankfully, also saw many of their members cease to reside in our community. I implore those opposite who have not lived under the threat of those criminal organisations to come and speak to Gold Coast residents before they seek to weaken and water down the ability of the incredible officers of the Queensland police force to perform their duties. I assure members that locals in the Gaven electorate never, ever want to return to the bad old days.

Life is a journey with many waypoints but no one, single destination. There are pivotal moments in my journey that have provided me with this incredible opportunity to serve the Gaven electorate as a state member of parliament. Prior to my appointment to this chamber, I had the privilege of serving as a Queensland Ambulance Service officer for over 14 years, along with my wife, Danielle, who has served as an ambulance officer for the past 17 years, assisting the people of South-East Queensland when they are most vulnerable and in their greatest need. Commencing as a communications officer in 2001, I quickly developed a passion for emergency communications and also for the value of dynamic leadership. Developing this passion for leadership, throughout my career I performed a number of roles in the service at regional and executive level and I have been fortunate to be recognised for my service to the community and my peers, including being awarded the 2010 Australia Day achievement medal for leadership and development of ambulance officers in South-East Queensland.

As all Queenslanders know, officers of the Queensland Ambulance Service selflessly place the care and welfare of others before themselves. At this point, I particularly highlight the pride that I have in my fellow emergency medical dispatchers and operations centre supervisors from across

Queensland. I could not have spent the past 14 years with a more dedicated and professional group of people, many of whom have become lifelong friends and are sitting in the gallery today. The role of an officer in an emergency operations centre involves managing an extremely high volume and complex emergency workload that often can be incredibly stressful, is always scrutinised and, unfortunately, is not provided the recognition it deserves. Those amazing people are truly the unsung heroes in emergency care. During my time in parliament, it will be my personal commitment to highlight and promote the recognition of the dedicated people who perform this important and valuable role in the police, fire and ambulance services. This commitment commences with my seeking support to allow emergency medical dispatchers and operations centre supervisors in the Queensland Ambulance Service their rightful entitlement to be awarded the National Emergency Medal for exceptional work performed during Cyclone Yasi and the Queensland floods of 2010, as per their counterparts in the Queensland fire service.

During my time in the Ambulance Service I always took a very active interest in the care and welfare of all of my fellow officers. On many occasions during my early years I watched in disbelief as failed systems of governance placed on the Queensland Ambulance Service were destroying the morale and, in some cases, the lives of ambulance officers across the state. It was the increasingly common view of ambulance officers in Queensland that the industrially registered union, United Voice—the very organisation that was recognised and remunerated to uphold the rights and entitlements of officers—had not only absolutely failed in their duty to represent their members but also been complicit with the QAS management and the Queensland Labor government of the time in covering up this appalling situation.

Recognising the need to fight this injustice, EMSPA—the Emergency Medical Services Protection Association—was established as a professional association to provide representation and support solely for the benefit of ambulance officers and not a political party. Commencing in 2005 with me as the founding member, EMSPA now represents thousands of ambulance officers across the eastern states of Australia. EMSPA is now a recognised industrial organisation for ambulance officers both in New South Wales, where they are the only organisation, and Victoria. A new branch has just been established in Tasmania.

Now known in Queensland as APAQ, the founding branch has a significant, longstanding membership amongst Queensland ambulance officers—and, in all likelihood, substantially greater than the official monopoly union United Voice—yet the Queensland Labor government has made it clear that as their employer they will not deal with the representative organisation that has the vast majority of ambulance officers who have chosen to join them. They will only deal with the monopoly union, chosen not by the workers themselves but in practice by other monopoly unions. This injustice has to stop.

Queensland ambulance officers, like all employees in Queensland, deserve the right not to be forced to deal with a monopoly union nominated by other monopoly unions but with the organisation that the employees themselves nominate. I believe it is their right to make the choice for themselves and not have it made for them. I will not stop until this injustice is righted for Queensland ambulance officers and all employees in Queensland.

It is important at this point for me to acknowledge two people in particular as without their belief in what we were seeking to achieve EMSPA would not exist in any form today. Mr Prebs Sathiaseelan, the founding and current president of EMSPA, now APAQ, and Mr Scott Clarke, the founding president of EMSPA New South Wales: your extraordinary courage and sacrifice, as we stood together in the face of a constant barrage of intimidation and misinformation by those in the union movement who would stop at nothing to see EMSPA fail, were absolutely inspirational, and I cannot thank you both enough for your friendship, respect and trust during those challenging times.

I am today as passionate as I was at the founding of EMSPA in my belief that an apolitical organisation that exists only to benefit members, that does not line the pockets of so-called organisers with overinflated pay packets or that does not throw members' hard-earned funds into political war chests, is the true future of staff representation in the industrial relations landscape in Australia. This belief is growing across many industries in Australia as employees come to understand that the thuggery and intimidation that seemingly go hand in hand with the antiquated, socialist ideologies of the Australian union movement have no part in the modern industrial landscape in Australia.

Negative, disruptive and even criminal behaviour by unions, as they seek to protect their monopoly, should not have anything to do with an employee's right to associate. I support an employee's right to associate with a representative group, but it should only be the employee who makes that decision. If there is a political divide on this issue, it is about who decides who should

represent the worker. Queensland workplaces need employee representative organisations that do not have a vested interest in chaos between employees and employers but instead are working to build an industrial relations environment where employees are treated fairly with regard to their rights and entitlements, while at the same time employers are also able to prosper and therefore employ even more Queenslanders and continue to build our economy.

I believe that, given the choice, employees will gravitate towards sensible, member focused organisations that are focused on outcomes and not ideologies. As a political party we have to trust that the employees can decide themselves who should represent them. The Labor Party believes that this choice should be denied to the employee. I will work to ensure that in future an LNP government backs the employee to have that choice.

My industrial relations activities initiated my interest in the political sphere and highlighted the democratic values and principles that underpin the LNP. EMSPA was assisted and supported by the member for Currumbin, Jann Stuckey. In fact, the association's first public rally took place outside the member for Currumbin's office in 2005. This is where I consider the effective reform of employee representation in Australia first started.

The LNP is a collaboration of passionate individuals who have the courage and belief to stand together and fight to achieve a free and democratic society where there is opportunity and reward for all those who are willing to work hard for it. Since becoming involved in the LNP I have come to know so many incredible people, and without them I would not be standing in this chamber today. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to thank some of them.

First and foremost to my brilliant campaign manager, Ben Murphy: thank you for the seemingly endless amount of time and energy you placed into the campaign. Your work ethic and professionalism were extraordinary. To my campaign team of Kristian Marlow, Chris O'Mara, Carley McNeil, Hermann Borster, James Kennett, Viv Grayson, Kylie Hart, Daniel Wissmann and Michael Gent: thank you all for stepping up when I needed it most. No effort was too great for any of you and I am very grateful for all that you have done for me.

Jann Stuckey, the member for Currumbin, and Dr Richard Stuckey: from the very first occasions that I laughed off your suggestions that I would make an ideal community advocate in the political arena, you never lost your belief in me. I will always be grateful to you both for the advice and friendship that you have given to me and my family over the past decade.

The Gaven LNP SEC is a fantastic group of fellow locals who have worked so hard for so long to achieve strong, stable LNP representation in the Gaven electorate. I would particularly acknowledge the friendship and support of two SEC members: Francis Aggugia, a life member of the LNP, and June Kennedy. Your friendship and support throughout my time is greatly appreciated.

The amazing powerhouse that is the Young LNP: I cannot thank you enough for your effort and belief in me since I made the decision to seek preselection. You are an incredible group of young leaders who were truly the engine room of my campaign. The army of volunteers who helped during the election campaign came from everywhere. They took it upon themselves to stand with me every day throughout prepoll and on election day to fight for every vote. To have so many people believe in our fight to win the seat of Gaven for the LNP was both humbling and awe inspiring.

My fellow LNP parliamentary team members: your acceptance, encouragement and support during my time as a candidate and now as a member are truly remarkable and are things that I greatly value and will work hard to reciprocate. I would especially like to thank my colleagues Jann Stuckey, Rob Molhoek, Ray Stevens, John-Paul Langbroek and Mark Boothman for all of their assistance and guidance during the campaign. I could not have done it without you.

LNP President Bruce McIver, LNP State Director Brad Henderson, and the LNP team headquarters: thank you for all the work that you did behind the scenes for my campaign. We could not have achieved success without you. Thanks especially to Matt Dunstan for his wisdom and efforts throughout the campaign. The honourable Lawrence Springborg, Leader of the Opposition: thank you for your leadership and assistance during the campaign. But as an ambulance officer I had the privilege to experience firsthand the incredible strides you made in repairing and cleaning up the Queensland health system when those before you failed and publicly expressed that Queensland Health was a basket case and needed to be split in two. I thank you for that.

I would also like to provide a special note of thanks to the former premier, Campbell Newman. He gave much of his valuable time to support my campaign and provide guidance and advice whenever I required it. I sincerely appreciate all that he did for me and also for being a leader who truly had the courage of his convictions.

I am humbled to be given the opportunity to be a strong voice and active representative of the Gaven electorate. I have wasted no time in rolling up my sleeves and working hard for community safety, for a stronger local economy and for greater employment in our local area. I will strive to lift the ability of our community organisations and charities to continue to serve our most vulnerable and disadvantaged to ensure that they are given the hand up they need to be able to contribute positively to their community and also to feel valued.

This is an exciting time to be part of the Gaven electorate, as the significance of our area to the Gold Coast region continues to grow in strength as we take on new opportunities in construction, tourism and commerce while also ensuring that our community infrastructure is able to sustain future generations. To serve the people of the Gaven electorate is truly an honour. I will dedicate myself to providing leadership and service so that all of the Gaven electorate shares in our future. I will uphold the values of this great state of Queensland and I will protect the democratic rights of all Queensland citizens.