



Speech by

## Dr Mark Robinson

MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND

Hansard Tuesday, 5 June 2012

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### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Cleveland—LNP) (8.27 pm): I rise in the House to deliver my speech in the address-in-reply in this the 54th Queensland Parliament. I acknowledge Her Excellency the Governor, Penelope Wensley, for her fine speech at the opening ceremony of parliament. I also acknowledge Queen Elizabeth in this her diamond jubilee year.

I consider it a privilege to be here today as the re-elected member for Cleveland and with an increased majority. I am grateful to the people of Cleveland for their emphatic vote of support and trust in me to represent them once again in this House and for the mandate they have given me and the LNP government to get Cleveland and the broader Redlands back on track. I am deeply honoured by the support that I have received from the people of North Stradbroke Island, Ormiston, Wellington Point, Birkdale, Cleveland and Thornlands.

The emphatic election win is proof that the formation of the LNP as one united conservative voice in Queensland has been a resounding success. I continue to be energised by all that the merged LNP party represents. The mandate that the LNP government has to implement our vision in Cleveland is most significant. The people of Cleveland have spoken and they have voiced their desire for the LNP to bring change.

It is also a personal highlight to be part of the Newman LNP government. To move from opposition to government in such an historic election has been an amazing experience. Campbell Newman ran a positive campaign and deserves to be Premier. I congratulate the member for Ashgrove, Campbell Newman, on his historic win. Congratulations also must go to the Deputy Premier, Jeff Seeney, and the Treasurer, Tim Nicholls, for their role in the election win. I also congratulate Fiona Simpson on her re-election and on her elevation to be the first female Speaker of the Queensland parliament.

I would like to also acknowledge the LNP state campaign team and party leadership during the election for their solid performance. In particular, President Bruce McIver and Vice President Gary Spence are to be commended for their leadership of the party organisation. I also thank my campaign team and volunteers for their hard work and dedication. While time does not permit me to list everyone, I want to particularly mention my staff—Sue, Paul and Tracey; my campaign manager, Paul; and key team members, the two Davids, Mal, Sean, the two Bobs, Tricia, Gordon, Rod and too many faithful people to name them all. I also want to acknowledge my fellow state MPs Peter Dowling and Steve Davies and federal member for Bowman, Andrew Laming. I also congratulate Karen Williams, the new mayor of the Redland City Council, and Graham Quirk and his LNP team for their re-election to the Brisbane City Council. My most important supporters, of course, have been my family. My wife of 26 years, Julie, and our wonderful children have sacrificed much for me to do this job. I love and appreciate them greatly.

To be returned as the member for Cleveland by an 18 per cent margin after winning the seat in 2009 in a cliffhanger by 155 votes was a humbling experience. This is particularly so when one considers that prior to 2009 the seat of Cleveland has only ever been held by the Labor Party. This unanimous victory was both a response to the positive vision of the LNP and a negative reaction to the Bligh government and its policies. In positive terms, we once again committed to the residents of Cleveland to deliver the

infrastructure and services that the people of Cleveland need so as to make Cleveland a better place in which to live. We recommitted to protecting and improving the quality of our bayside lifestyle. The result was also a negative reaction to the former government's poor performance in a whole range of areas—the economy, health and education to name a few. Local issues were also important in Cleveland—issues to do with local pieces of infrastructure, whether it was roads or the Eastern Busway or rail services or other issues such as Redlands water, permanent exclusion zones to recreational fishers in Moreton Bay and the long-term future of North Stradbroke Island. The Bligh government was seen by the people of Cleveland as having failed in these and many other areas.

I am honoured in my first term to have served on the committees of members' ethics and transport and local government, also to have served as the parliamentary secretary for education and training with a focus on apprenticeships and trade training and to have served as the shadow minister for fisheries, marine infrastructure and main roads. These have all been opportunities to serve that I am truly grateful for.

Can I take a moment to say to the new members of parliament, apart from congratulations for being here, that many varied opportunities to serve will come your way. Sometimes things may move slow, other times fast. Sometimes you may move up, other times sideways or even down for a time. Can I remind all of us that we are not here for ourselves, but we are here for our community. Let them, not position or rank, title or career advancement, be the main source that we draw strength from. Let it be the people we serve that motivates us. They put us here and they decide how long we remain.

Many an MP has put the cart before the horse only to find themselves left behind. Now I consider myself most fortunate to have the chance to serve this parliament as the Deputy Speaker. I am honoured to work with Madam Speaker, Fiona Simpson, and with all of the parliamentary staff.

In terms of my electorate, in my 2009 maiden speech I outlined many local facts and people including all past MPs, something I will not repeat today. But I would like to acknowledge two former members from the Redlands region for their contributions past and present to good conservative government in Queensland. Both men were also ministers of the Bjelke-Petersen government—the late John Goleby, the member for Redlands from 1974 to 1985, and Paul Clauson, the member for Redlands from 1985 to 1989. John served as the minister for maritime services and minister for water resources. John Goleby sadly passed away in a tragic accident in the mid-1980s. He is survived by his wife, Betty, who so kindly gifted to me a set of John's parliamentary cufflinks and pin. I wore them with Redlands pride on my first day in the chair as Deputy Speaker.

Paul Clauson served as state Attorney-General, minister for justice, minister for corrective services and minister for the arts. Since his retirement from state parliament in 1989, Paul has served the people of Queensland in various capacities and continues to do so today. I honour both of these men.

It would be remiss of me in mentioning local issues to not mention the local Indigenous people of North Stradbroke Island. I would like to acknowledge the Quandamooka as the original inhabitants and custodians of the Redland mainland and North Stradbroke Island. I am proud to be the local MP for the Quandamooka people and to have supported their quest for justice via their native title claim on North Stradbroke Island. I look forward to working with the elders to implement the claim in a way that is fair and just and that works for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents of the island.

What of my journey, values and priorities for Cleveland? In my maiden speech in 2009 I outlined my journey to state politics that took me through more than 25 years of professional life before I arrived here. While I will not subject the House to a repeat of that journey, I do wish to make a few pertinent personal points. I was raised in a small business family in a rural town in Gippsland. I moved to Townsville in 1981 as a 17-year-old to do my first degree, a Bachelor of Science at James Cook University, majoring in marine biology and zoology. Over the next 10 years I worked in the education sector as a TAFE science teacher, tutor, lecturer, chaplain and in Indigenous education. My wife, Julie, and I met at university, where she studied social work. Most recently she completed her masters in social work at the University of Queensland. We were married in 1985, bought a house, started a family. After a stint in Melbourne in the late 1990s, we returned to Queensland, first to Mount Gravatt for two years and then for the last 10 years on acreage in the Redlands.

Between 2000 and 2009 I completed a masters degree in international studies and Asian studies at Griffith University and a PhD in cultural studies, primarily Asian studies to do with Indonesia, at the University of Queensland. During that time, I continued to work in various education roles—mainly lecturing in multicultural and intercultural studies. I have also been involved in charity management, working with children and youth. A highlight of this work in my previous career was helping in 2008 to build a new orphanage in Indonesia. I found that the skills I learned in my professional career prior to parliament have been a great help to me in my current roles, as no doubt many other members have found and new members will also find.

Living in various parts of Queensland also has taught me much about our great state and its people. I have loved living in North Queensland, in Townsville; spending huge blocks of time in Central Queensland, in Rockhampton and Yeppoon where my wife's family are from; visiting cattle stations in west Queensland; and more recently living in Brisbane and the Redlands, the greater south-east part of Brisbane. Meeting and understanding Queenslanders whether from the far north or the south-west has also been of great assistance to me in this work.

Many of the principles that I have learned in my journey have thus far been useful in my service of the people of Cleveland. They are, among others, family values; educational opportunities; small business, hard work and job creation; balanced growth and sustainability; and social justice and care for the underprivileged. I outlined these points in my maiden speech, where more detail can be found. The family is the basic building block of society. Communities are strong when their families are strong. The strong traditional family unit has made our state and nation great. Governments must make laws that help families to stay strong and be strong for the sake of both the adults and the children.

I am grateful for both the learning and teaching opportunities that I have had. I am most fortunate to have attended fine state primary and high schools and three Queensland universities—James Cook University, Griffith University and the University of Queensland—and to have taught in TAFEs, university and private colleges. I enjoy working with schools and with universities wherever opportunities present today.

The small businesses of Cleveland have been hit hard in recent years and need relief. They have expressed their gratefulness for the LNP's policies that will assist them. In our state, many millions of jobs have been generated over our history through the productive output of small and medium-sized businesses. In Cleveland and North Stradbroke Island, small businesses, retail, tourism, mining, construction, fishing and farming are important, among other industries. Local job creation is of paramount importance to the residents of Cleveland. About 60 per cent of all Redland workers leave Redland City each day to travel to work outside the area. This is one of the challenges that we face.

My early experiences in marine sciences and zoology underline my commitment to the environment. Clevelanders respect their environment but want the opportunity to live within it without apologising for their presence. Further, residents, recreational fishers and marine businesses want a better outcome in Moreton Bay. Recreation fishermen in my electorate continue to call for fairer and better access to fishing areas in Moreton Bay.

I have made no secret of the fact that I am a person of Christian faith and that my faith is an important part of my private life. I am proud of the Judeo-Christian heritage of our state and nation. My faith has been an important motivator of my charitable work with children and troubled youth. It has inspired me to work with the poor and needy, both in Queensland and in many developing countries. I believe that faith and politics can and do co-exist well. I thank the LNP for its diversity of views. We are a broad church that allows a true freedom of faith and speech. Let me close by thanking the residents of Cleveland for their trust and support. I recommit to working hard for their sake.