




Speech By  
**Mark Boothman**

**MEMBER FOR ALBERT**

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Record of Proceedings, 19 May 2015

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY**

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (2.59 pm): Firstly, I would like to congratulate the member for Nicklin in his new role as the Speaker of the House and I wish him all the best. I also wish to congratulate all of the new members of the House and all of the returning members. Also, special congratulations go to Premier Anastacia and her new cabinet team. I would also like to thank all of the new members who have mentioned the previous representatives of their electorates. To me it is a good sign that they are humble individuals and it shows good character. I wish to especially congratulate the new member for Gaven, Sid Cramp. It is great to see that we have another LNP member back in the lovely seat of Gaven, a picturesque part of the Gold Coast region.

I wish to thank the wonderful residents of the Albert electorate for re-electing me for another term. It has certainly been a great honour over the last three years, and I look forward to working hard for my local community again. We have achieved so many great outcomes over the past three years, and I will certainly mention them later in my speech. The Albert electorate is a diverse place which includes the northern Gold Coast and southern Logan City areas. It is made up of the suburbs of Upper Coomera, Oxenford, Maudsland in the south; Cedar Creek, Wolffdene and Buccan in the west; and Windaroo and Mount Warren Park in the north.

You could certainly say that the Albert electorate is the gateway to the Gold Coast. Everybody travelling the M1 motorway as they head down to the Gold Coast from Brisbane passes through the wonderful electorate of Albert. You get to see the beautiful rolling hills to the west. It is a place where you could say dreams actually happen and where families put down roots. It is a place where you can change your life, because Albert is the development corridor of the northern Gold Coast. It is a place where we see massive infrastructure projects, such as the exit 54 upgrade commencing in the near future—something that we have always been very passionate about.

The Albert electorate is a wonderful community, with Lions clubs, Rotary clubs and Soroptimist clubs. But it also has a fantastic environment when it comes to our volunteers in respect of the SES and the Rural Fire Service—people like Col Veivers, who runs the Rural Fire Service at Wolffdene; Bevan Love, who runs the Rural Fire Service at Ormeau; and Paul Graham, who runs the Rural Fire Service at Coomera Valley. These individuals give so much of their time to making our electorate a safer place. It is good to see these individuals at our local community events on regular occasions educating our residents about proper bushfire management procedures. I thank them profusely for all of their work.

The Ormeau Lions Club for many years has been participating in and organising the Ormeau Fair. The Ormeau Fair is a massive event in the electorate. Tens of thousands of residents from all over Logan City and the Gold Coast region congregate at this fair that we call the poor man's Ekka. It is a wonderful family event but it also gives local businesses an opportunity to showcase their wares and to say, 'These are your local businesses in your local area. Can you come and support us?'—which is a wonderful initiative. Also, with the centenary of the Anzacs this year, our local RSLs did a

fantastic job looking after the local cenotaphs, organising events and showing direction and a passion to ensure that these individuals who fought and sacrificed their lives will never, ever be forgotten.

I can certainly say that the 2015 election campaign was memorable in more ways than one. I can certainly say that my beautiful electorate was overrun by individuals in green shirts. I have never seen so many individuals in green shirts hanging on every major intersection throughout the electorate.

**Mr Watts:** You should have come to Toowoomba.

**Mr BOOTHMAN:** I take the interjection from the member for Toowoomba North. We could have a competition to see who had more. But the thing is that even at the midpoint of the campaign we got on quite well with those guys because, when it comes down to it, I do not understand their beliefs but I respect their beliefs. I do not understand where they are coming from but I respect their right to share their opinions. Therefore, we actually got on quite well with them. In prepolling we ended up having good conversations et cetera, and my team generally enjoyed the banter between each side—so much so that we received a Facebook message from Peter Simpson thanking us for our campaign and for the fact that there were no altercations or issues from either side, which my team is certainly proud of because we were not interested in that type of thing. But our little LNP team down in Albert was, you could say, greatly outnumbered by the massive number of green shirts around the district.

But I wish to thank those individuals who spent a lot of time helping my team and those working on my team—individuals like Gary Berndt, Daniel Grant, Pat Stanfield, Philip Boothman, Ken Wilkie, Stewart Proud, Jan Barr and my campaign manager, my father, Peter Boothman. He stood at the prepolling booth every single day. He would get there very early in the morning, at 6 am, to make sure we got a good spot. He was certainly very passionate and he worked extremely hard. I also want to thank my office staff, especially Sharee Allaway for her dedication to my office and hard work. It has been a great privilege having Sharee working in my office, and I look forward to her working there for many years to come.

Most importantly, I would like to thank my family—my wife, Kanako, and my three wonderful children, Eleanor, Samuel and Maya. I realise that this job eats your life up, and the amount of time you get to spend with your family can be quite limited—to the point that my daughter Eleanor calls my father 'Dad' and calls me 'Mark'—because this is a job that we do with great pride and passion. But when I do get a moment I certainly enjoy sitting down with my children and reading them a bedtime story. I can certainly say that my daughter and my son are very appreciative of that.

The Albert electorate, as I mentioned before, is home to a broad range of occupations and incomes, and none more so than one—that is, the tradie. Every morning I see streams of utes pouring out of the electorate heading north, heading west and heading south, looking for pay packets to pay their mortgages and to put food on the table. Economic development is crucial to us. That is why we were so passionate about the M1 exit 54 upgrade. It is at this point that I would like to thank my federal members of parliament—Mr Bert van Manen, the member for Forde, and Mr Stuart Robert, the member for Fadden—for obtaining the necessary federal funding for this crucial project. I would also like to thank our former treasurer, Tim Nicholls, for understanding how crucial this was and allocating funding for it. I also have to thank the new incoming government for not cutting funding for this crucial project. This crucial project will create an enormous number of jobs in my area. It will create further development around the Upper Coomera and Coomera areas through the Coomera Town Centre. Thousands of much needed jobs will be created for our tradies and for individuals leaving school in the near future.

Construction is the lifeblood of the Albert electorate and business confidence is crucial. Recent news that major projects around the Gold Coast region, including the cruise ship terminal, have been cut has sent a shiver down the spine of business, causing a lack of confidence in the local business market. Quoting from the *Courier-Mail's* article on Friday, 1 May—

The March quarter Westpac Group CCIQ Pulse Survey of Business Conditions described the Government's change in policy direction as a 'major cause for concern'.

The same survey recorded a boost in confidence immediately following the election of the Bligh government in 2009, the Newman government in 2012 ...

We need major projects. We need to ensure that these projects get up because my tradies rely on them. It is crucial for their economic progress.

In stark contrast, when I was first elected to this House in 2012 there was a major issue in the southern part of my electorate, and that was the John Muntz Causeway. This causeway was constantly out of action. Every time we had a flood, engineers had to shore up the structure by pouring concrete in the gaps. The previous government spent millions and millions on this project

when the bridge should have been replaced. Every time this bridge was out of action it cost businesses on Mount Tamborine millions and caused local businesses in the Upper Coomera region to close because traffic could not traverse the bridge or, if the bridge was down to one lane, it would cause massive traffic jams and people would steer clear of the area. I was very happy when the former treasurer, Tim Nicholls, allocated funding for a permanent solution to this bridge which cost Queensland taxpayers about \$15 million.

One area I have been very passionate about since becoming the member for Albert is education. I have served on the education committee since 2012, and I requested to be put back on the education committee because I would like to see some changes to make a better world for the younger people coming through. One thing that appalled me when I first commenced my role in the House was the condition of some of my local schools. In one of the toilet blocks in the back part of Gaven State School the lights were hanging out of the ceiling. Water had damaged the roof ceiling struts so badly that the lights actually fell out. Therefore, the students of that school were forced to use one toilet for the whole school.

From the Advancing our Schools Maintenance fund, our schools received about \$2.2 million, which they used to fix those lights, fix doors, paint walls and make our schools respectable. I well remember one of my principals in a school over 150 years old saying to me, 'Mark, how can I compete with the brand-new schools on the opposite side of the highway when you look at the state of my school?' Parents would come in and judge the school by its cover. These schools now all look brand spanking new and our students take great pride in them. Pimpama State School is an example for all schools to follow. It is a beautiful school which is achieving wonderful results.

Another matter I would like to speak about is NAPLAN results. With the Great Results Guarantee funding, we have seen absolutely fantastic NAPLAN results in my local schools. Schools like Norfolk Village State School have received their best NAPLAN results ever in the school's history. That is a fantastic achievement from the staff, students, principal and parents, all jumping behind this additional funding. As we all know, the Great Results Guarantee funding was allocated directly to, and administered by, the schools. It gave principals the power to direct funding to where it was most needed. In addition, every school in the Albert district bar one has flashing school zone lights. We had a great campaign over the last three years to implement these wonderful safety features. It just shows the importance the previous LNP government placed on our local schools.

Since 2012 we have increased the number of police officers allocated to the police stations which cover our area by 45. This gives support to our officers. If they ever need backup, instead of getting one or two officers, if they were lucky, there are now multiple vehicles to back them up. That is something which our local officers very much appreciate.

Finally, I want to talk about one other issue which I have been very passionate about for a long time, and that is the Logan River powerlines. It is an issue that keeps on giving. The previous member for Logan, Michael Pucci, the previous member for Waterford, Michael Latter, Jon Krause, the member for Beaudesert, and I were very strong on this issue.

**Mr McArdle** interjected.

**Mr BOOTHMAN:** Yes, and the former minister. We pushed and pushed to get this issue on the table—to get negotiations happening between Energex, the council and the community. I am still very disappointed in Energex in that it has not progressed to a mutual agreement with the local community. All the community is requesting is to limit the number of crossings on the river to one. They are asking for one crossing of the river. Whilst I am happy that Energex is willing to put a section of powerlines underground through the Albert electorate—and I commend Energex for putting that on the table—the community is still adamant that it wants one crossing. I know that the new member for Logan is trying his best to champion the cause. I do hope that we can limit this powerline to one crossing and work with the community on the issue. I implore the new government to work with the community to make sure that the community is heard.