



Speech By  
**Nikki Boyd**

**MEMBER FOR PINE RIVERS**

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### MAIDEN SPEECH

 **Miss BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (8.40 pm): In rising I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet today. I pay my respects to their elders, past, present and future, for they hold the memories, traditions, culture and hopes of Indigenous Australia. I am honoured to be elected Labor's member and representative for Pine Rivers. I am deeply thankful to the people of my community for placing their faith in me. My electorate had a 21.3 per cent swing back to Labor. The outcome was an outright rejection of what the previous government had to offer and a reversion to working class labour values: values of equity, opportunity, fairness and reform. In my community I have shared in and seen firsthand the daily struggles and triumphs. I have spent over a decade as a labour and union activist doing my best to make a positive mark on our society. Labour values are the values of the people I got to know so well in Pine Rivers.

My electorate is a place where too many in our community go without. Decisions made in this place by governments can hurt or help. Cuts have deep impacts and when decisions hurt they hit hardest those with the least in Pine Rivers. I am uncomfortable with individualism by instinct because so much of my life has been about the collective—caring for others, working with others, organising and campaigning with others. The only power that matters is the power of the collective. But a collective is made up of individual stories and individual journeys.

My journey to get to this place is very much from humble beginnings. I grew up in a female dominated household, a working-class family like many in our community who strive to make a better future. My mum, Gerri, taught me the values of hard work and determination in following your heart. The year her youngest daughter started school was the year she started a university degree as a mature age student. Mum's struggle and determination resulted in her becoming the first in her family to gain a university degree. She works as a palliative care nurse with terminally ill patients who choose to be at home surrounded by their loved ones when they pass. My dad, Jimbo, recently retired. He has spent his working life predominantly in the Australian tax office. There he chased after big businesses and international corporations to ensure that they paid their fair share back into our community. He instilled in me that everything has a value and the importance of a value placed on everything and that nothing in this world comes for free. When public servants are demonised as pen-pushers or fat cats or bureaucrats, those who are actually being persecuted are workers—workers who provide a service to us all, workers like my parents.

I would like to thank my family for providing me with strong foundations and unwavering support and guidance. My sister, Lisa, and her husband, Steve, live in a remote Indigenous community in the Territory. Twelve days ago they welcomed their first child into this world—Ezekiel—who has inherited his middle name from the late, great Gough Whitlam. Lisa is more than a sister. Over the years she has been a carer, roommate, friend and mentor. I thank Lisa and Steve for being so bold in the way that they live their lives and always giving and unselfishly being there for those in need. My brother, Matt, who is with us tonight, has guided me through life on a journey of self-discovery and betterment. I am proud not only to call Nicole a sister-in-law but a great friend. Over recent years they have

brought two brilliant little souls into our lives: Lachy, who is full of kindness, creativity and imagination; and Rachie, who is fiercely independent and full of resolve. Thank you for always having a place in your home for me and time on the campaign trail to secure this win. To Amanda and Tim, I thank you for your encouragement, interest and enthusiasm. Your energy is very often drawn upon. Your determination and strong wills are certainly reflected in your little man, Finn. To my extended family, you have all played a part in this and I thank you for your support. Around my family are lifelong family friends. Thank you to the Timmses and the Coles, some of whom are here tonight, for your ongoing encouragement and support. To my parents I say thank you for believing in me and always being on my side. The sacrifices you have made to provide for us all have not been lost on me.

I find myself in this place in life also due to the great labour movement. I joined my union as an early childhood educator. I found working in the sector enormously rewarding and fulfilling. At that time a job at Woolies stocking shelves paid the same or more as a qualified educator. Money was not a motivator for me and to this day it is still not, but the reality that I have learned is that it is a necessity. Working in a female dominated workforce must never be an impediment to being able to make a living or not. It is a stain on our society that it is. So many of us want careers that make a difference in this world. Too many face the difficult choice of walking away from the careers and the work that they love simply because it is not sustainable. The more time I spent campaigning full-time in different female dominated industries the more I realised my story and my struggle was not mine alone. My story is shared by thousands of others just like me. Labor must be about all those who work, be it an early educator struggling to make ends meet, a small businesswoman trying to make her dream a reality, a woman in the corporate world whose career is held back by entrenched and subliminal discrimination or those who have been left out or left behind in our economy entirely. That is why I stood as a Labor candidate and why I am so proud to be part of a Labor government in Queensland.

We are for all who work. We are about fairness. That is the Labor story and it is built from the stories of thousands like me who know that there must be a better way. Labor's values are the values of hard work and family. Conservatives seek to demolish family through simple things like removing penalty rates to steal our weekends. They seek to demonise those who are out of work. They do not understand that it is their values that the community is rejecting. Labor loses elections when it abandons its values. Conservatives lose them when they uphold theirs.

I am proud to play a part in this state Labor government. One hundred years ago women became able to run for Queensland parliament for the first time. I am proud to have a strong and tenacious female Premier and Deputy Premier leading our state 100 years later. I am proud that Labor has a front bench that has as many women as the sum of all in the LNP caucus.

Pine Rivers has a long history of strong female representatives from both sides of politics. Having considerable influence with me is Linda Lavarch. I would like to thank Linda for her unwavering support and guidance through my campaign. Rarely do you encounter a lady with the intelligence, grace and dignity of Linda. To the former member for Aspley Bonnie Barry, I say thank you for always being there, for your perspective, sense and focus. To my predecessor, Seath Holswich, on behalf of Pine Rivers I thank you for your contribution over the last three years. I wish you and your family well in your future endeavours outside of this place.

To Dick, Anthony, Evan and the party office team, thank you. Thank you to Bill Shorten for launching our campaign and Mark Butler for lifting our spirits. Thank you to senators Claire Moore and Jan McLucas for your support over the years. Senator Chris Ketter, thank you for the hours of doorknocking and campaigning that you contributed. Thank you to Brett Murphy, who brought his camera to the suburbs and got us started on the campaign trail. Thank you to all community supporters and ALP members and life members who played a part in our election victory.

I would like to acknowledge a lady who for so many has been a mentor, sister, comrade and friend. Wendy Turner has for years been offering me guidance and support and I am certain that I owe much to her perseverance and dedication. Thanks to Councillor Mick Gillam for his unwavering assistance and profile-building support. He was always there for me. He opened many doors to our great community along the way.

In the campaign my team and I made over 46½ thousand phone calls, we knocked on over 19½ thousand doors and we held hundreds of street stalls. Decisions made over the last three years in this place have hurt us in Pine Rivers. In the months leading up to the election our community was screaming out for change, screaming out to be heard, screaming out for fairness and it is in Labor that they will find that.

Queenslanders are battlers. It gives us a sense of pride and achievement to know that we are making it work against the odds. People in my community do not need us in this place to do everything for them. They need us to understand that when we make laws we make their daily

struggle harder or easier. We need to make sure our decisions build a better today for them and a better tomorrow for their children. We need to give their families opportunity and themselves fairness. I will always stand up and fight for what is right. My record demonstrates that. That is why when the Bligh government sold our assets, I took a stand and I campaigned against it. When the LNP proposed asset sales I did exactly the same thing. When blue collar jobs like those in rail, port or power are lost they are gone forever. Our community is no better for having lost them.

I remember what made me decide to run for parliament. For many years I had the honour of representing Queensland's allied health professionals. I recall one meeting in metro north in 2012. I was presented with another spreadsheet of jobs that were to go. Each line on the spreadsheet represented a life that was being torn apart, a family being plunged into uncertainty and a community with one less dedicated public health professional. The cuts at Prince Charles, the royal, Caboolture and Redcliffe were some of the deepest. I decided to stand for parliament as a Labor candidate because I believe that when things are wrong you stand up and you do something about them, and that was wrong in every sense of the word.

I would like to sincerely thank the members of United Voice for the privilege of working with them and for them over the past decade, campaigning in under recognised sectors. Thank you to Gary and the executive for the investment they made in me over the years and for the enormous support they provided me with to win back Pine Rivers.

After a decade, you form some close bonds. Thank you to my mentors at the Missos: the member for Springwood, Mick de Brenni; David Pullen; the member for Capalaba, Don Brown; and my ever-inspirational mate who is cool on four continents, David Malley. Unfortunately, my mentor—the one who got me started in the ALP—is no longer with us, but in many ways he has never left us. Thank you to my comrade, Ian Burgett, his wonderful wife, Michelle, and their daughters who continue to support me. The backup and campaigning contributions from my United Voice comrades, including those who came from across the country, was phenomenal and I thank them all for their efforts through the hot campaign this January summer.

Thanks also for the unwavering support provided to me by my union, the Electrical Trades Union. I am a proud member of the ETU, the union that ran the Not4Sale campaign right across this state. Not4Sale was a strong grassroots community campaign, initiated by energy workers across Queensland who appreciated that we would be worse off under a privatised model. There is little doubt in my mind that the recent state election was, indeed, a referendum on the sale or lease of our assets. I can assure the people of my community that I have heard them loud and clear. After the fight of our lives, we have kept our assets in public hands.

I thank my comrades at the ETU not only for their successful campaign but also for the support they offered to my community. I am proud to call the member for Kallangur, Shane King, a comrade and a friend. I am certain that I would not be standing in this place if it were not for him. Fiercely loyal and with an unwavering compass, he is one of a kind. I very much value the support, friendship and camaraderie that I find in him and his family.

I acknowledge the role of the Queensland union movement, the Queensland Council of Unions, CFMEU members, members of Together and Young Labor in winning back Pine Rivers. In the short time that I have been here I have seen those opposite demonise and ridicule unions. I am proudly a unionist, someone who believes in the collective and I will endlessly stand up for fairness, equality and opportunity. We should always be striving to make a difference for those in our community who need it most, those at risk of being left behind or not heard, and those not able to fight for a fair go.

I would like to thank the kergs and, at the heart of that, is my mate Kegan Scherf. He has been a constant support to us in Pine Rivers and has played critical roles in campaigns right across the state. He has a bright future ahead of him and I thank him for getting our campaign off the ground and for keeping it going when times got tough. Another kerg in the gallery, and certainly the chief kerg on our campaign, is undoubtedly Taylor Bunnag. He is someone who sees how absolutely precious and volatile our community is. I am very fortunate that post campaign he continues to make sacrifices to remain involved, active and at the forefront of ensuring that our community has a voice.

I acknowledge Jim Grant, a Joyner local and some 80 years of age. 2015 was the second time in Jim's life that he made a political donation. The first was when Maxine McKew ran against John Howard. At the last election, Jim donated to the Pine Rivers and the Ashgrove campaigns to put an end to Campbell Newman. He knew that to change government we needed to change not just Campbell Newman's seat but also seats such as Pine Rivers.

I would not be here without the guidance and support of one of my best mates and the love of my life, Reece Pianta. An enormously intelligent, strategic and great political talent, Reecie is always there for me in every imaginable way. He likes to joke that he tricked me into agreeing to marry him,

but I feel confident that I have the better deal. My life is never short of laughter or joy when you are around and I very much look forward to spending the rest of my days with you, making all of our dreams a reality.

There is a new sense of confidence in my community, but the work of rebuilding has only just begun. I and all of us here will be judged by the economy we rebuild. We must build an economy that works for people, not an economy that enslaves our community. The dignity of work is fundamental and local job creation is my focus for Pine Rivers.

Labor builds things and the Moreton Bay Rail Link is a great Labor initiative. It is providing 8,000 jobs for people in my community. Local jobs result in improvements to our way of life. Less time commuting to employment means more time with loved ones and a better life balance. Our local roads and public transport continue to groan under the demands being placed on them each day. Local jobs are the long-term solution. The shorter term solution is a better integrated transport network. For example, a safer train station at Strathpine without a dangerous level crossing would remove lengthy delays for commuters and allow more train services. A station at Strathpine that is equipped with improved disability access would improve equity of access. A simple upgrade such as that could have significant positive effects for the people of my community. Many small steps like those make up the fabric of Labor's tradition of community centred governance.

Infrastructure creates jobs and a transport network gets people to and from those jobs in a timely fashion, giving quality of life, but education is the key to our future. Lawnton State School is one of the many in my electorate that has grown rapidly in recent times. It lacks essential infrastructure such as a school hall that all of the school community can fit in. I am proud to be part of a party that fundamentally believes in education. I believe we will be the kind of party and the kind of government that delivers for schools such as Lawnton in my electorate.

Those are the things that I know to be priorities in my electorate. They are the things that I believe we must secure. They are fundamental. They are jobs, they are roads and they are school facilities. For my entire life I have stood up for people: in my profession of childcare when I knew that things were so wrong, as a union official working with health workers and as a political campaigner against asset sales. I have had faith in collective action because I have experienced its power to make lives better. That is why community works. I was raised with the values of hard work and care for others. Those values have driven me through my working life and those are the values that I bring with me to this place.