



Speech by


# Mark Boothman

MEMBER FOR ALBERT

Hansard Tuesday, 29 May 2012

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## MAIDEN SPEECH

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (4.54 pm): Firstly, I wish to congratulate the Speaker of the House, Fiona Simpson. It is an honour to have you as our Speaker in the 54th Parliament. We know you will serve the role of Speaker with the utmost integrity. I also want to recognise the diamond jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and the traditional landowners of the Albert region, the Yugambah people. Today I stand here humbled by the task in front of me. This is a task I do not take lightly. This is a task which can only be achieved through perseverance and dedication. I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the people of Albert who, by giving me their vote, wish me to represent their ideals and aspirations. No matter what your beliefs or your political ideals, I am here to represent all equally and fairly. I am your grassroots servant.

I pledge my loyalty to the people of Albert and the 54th Parliament. I want to dedicate my speech to three former members of parliament. My mentor and former member for Forde, Kay Elson: you have always been an inspiration and I have learnt so much from you. To the Hon. David Jull, my former campaign director: you will be remembered for your wonderful persona and jolly nature. To my good friend and confidant the Hon. Ivan Gibbs, former member for Albert: your wisdom will never be forgotten. Unfortunately, during the campaign tragedy struck with the loss of two great Queensland political figures in David Jull and Ivan Gibbs. David and Ivan, you will be greatly missed.

On 26 July 2008 a momentous moment in Queensland political history unfolded with the formation of the Liberal National Party. It was a dream thought to be impossible. However, this dream came true through passionate resolve of visionaries such as Bruce McIver, Gary Spence, Lawrence Springborg and Mark McArdle. These men will be recorded in the annals of political history. However, we must not forget all the rank-and-file members and delegates who participated in the merger. It is the members who should also be thanked, for if it was not for them and their support and vision for a grand future of our state and party we would not be in this place today.

There is one individual I wish to mention personally—Bruce Duncan, the LNP regional chair for the Gold Coast. Our friendship developed during the merger process and has continued to this day. He is a man of impeccable character who went to enormous lengths to streamline the merger on a local level. Bruce, I thank you for your guidance and your friendship.

To my beautiful wife and darling daughter, your steadfast support during the campaign was instrumental in putting me in this House. You never wavered when it came to hard work and you always supported my endeavours. In the final days of the campaign you were a shining light that kept me motivated and grounded.

To my father Peter, the teachings you instilled in us at a young age have served us well. Your teachings of hard work, education and, most importantly, do unto others as you would have them do unto you are values we live by. You were the oldest son of a sharefarmer. You have worked hard for what you have and at the age of 68 you simply do not know when to give up. My mother, Marjorie, has always been the anchor of my family. She is a lady of determination and has given steadfast support. To my brother,

Paul, thanks mate. No-one could ever wish for a better brother. I am blessed to have a wonderful family. The family unit is the cornerstone of our society and that is a principle I live by.

I wish to convey my appreciation to all of those who have helped the LNP Albert campaign. Their help was instrumental in victory. I will mention just a few of those friends and supporters by name: firstly, Elizabeth Holton, my campaign manager, and her ever wonderful husband, Garry. Their loyalty and dedication is legendary. I thank the Caulfield family, Pam and Errol, and my SEC chairman, Darren Caulfield, for the endless help they have been. Every time we asked for help, they were there to assist. I thank Stewart Proud, Gary Berndt and, of course, Paul Badger and Sheree Allaway. I would also like to mention Michael Crandon and Michael Latter for their steadfast support during the campaign.

The state electorate of Albert was created for the 1888 election. That means that the Albert electorate is one of the oldest electorates in Queensland. Before the 1920s, the electorate covered a vast area, including the entire Gold Coast and Beaudesert shires. Since then, the electorate has endured multiple redistributions to form its present day boundaries and size. Tom Plunkett senior, a member of the conservative party, has the honour of being the first member for Albert—from 1888 to 1896 and from 1899 to 1908. I also wish to recognise the two previous members who served the people of Albert: Bill Baumann, who served my community from 1996 to 2001, and Margaret Keech, who served from 2001 to 2012. I wish them all the very best and I thank them for their service.

The electorate of Albert comprises a diverse mix of urban, industrial and semi-rural lands located halfway between Brisbane and the Gold Coast—from Mount Warren Park in the north, Studio Village in the south and Buccan in the west. The Albert electorate is spread across the second and third largest cities in Queensland, Gold Coast City and Logan City. Demographically, the electorate continues to change owing to its high transient population and continued development. The Albert electorate is situated in the northern Gold Coast corridor, which continues to be one of the fastest growing and developing areas in Australia. It is home to the forest-covered rolling hills of the Northern Darlington Range—an area of unique beauty and home to rare species such as the Ormeau bottle tree. The Albert electorate is also blessed with panoramic views of the Gold Coast from its southern vantage points. It is a wonderful area of splendour and diversity.

The northern areas of the Albert electorate contain one of the most significant industrial areas within Queensland. The Yatala Enterprise Area contains over 550 small, medium and large businesses that employ over 10,000 workers. The southern sections of the electorate contain some of Australia's best known playgrounds: Movie World, Wet'n'Wild and Outback Spectacular. It should be noted that Movie World has been successful in the creation of first-class entertainment. Movies such as *House of Wax*, *Peter Pan* and *Fortress*, just to name a few, were made at its Gold Coast facilities.

The Albert electorate is blessed with successful community groups that work tirelessly for the greater good. But even with these successful community groups, there is a great need for individual identity in some districts. As technology has developed, we have been pushed away from face-to-face conversing to a more impersonal electronic world. That is a world that creates its own set of dilemmas through cyberbullying and crime. Building stronger communities builds strong individuals. These words have echoed throughout history and they are as true today as they ever were. I am honoured to say that the community groups of the Albert electorate should be proud of their achievements. The Ormeau Lions Club holds a very successful Ormeau Fair every year, which attracts over 10,000 people. Norm Jessen, the President of the Ormeau Lions Club, should be recognised as being one of the great achievers in my district for the hard work that he does every year in organising this fair. He has gone a long way to personalising my community. Heather Christensen of Quota International of Beenleigh is another worthy person to mention. Her tireless work for the Quota International eisteddfod is be commended. Quota has given youth the opportunity to live their lives out on the stage.

I also wish to recognise the Logan State Emergency Service—a service that I have been a member of for seven years. Its dedication to its community is of the highest standard. It never turns down a call for help. Mayor Pam Parker calls them her orange angels. I wish to mention two members of the Logan State Emergency Service: firstly, the local controller, Jim Ferguson. He became the local controller only weeks before the devastating 2011 floods. His ability to organise and adapt to a continually changing situation instilled confidence in his members. He should be proud of what he has achieved in a very short time. The city of Logan can rest easy in the knowledge that we have people like Jim Ferguson. No words can describe my admiration for Terry Chapman. His passion for the state emergency service and his community knows no bounds. He would have to be one of the longest-serving members of this great organisation. Whenever a member has a question, he is always the first to answer.

I will not limit my congratulations to three volunteer organisations. Many other organisations work hard for my community—Rotary, other Lions clubs, community action groups such as the Ormeau Progress Association, Landcare, My Ormeau, Neighbourhood Watch, the Rural Fire Service and many others. As I have previously alluded, I am proud to have been a long-serving member of multiple community organisations. Over the years I have built many friendships from these community groups. It is a testament to those friendships that it is those people who I call upon.

I come here humbled and grateful to be the elected representative of about 31,000 electors of Albert. My philosophy has always been of hard work. I fully support the LNP's ideals. Governments are here to represent their constituents and spend taxpayers' money wisely. When governments fail in their fiscal management of budgets, it is hardworking taxpayers who bear the cost through increased taxes and reduced services.

Failure to rectify budgetary deficits only passes the legacy onto the next generation. I do not want to see my daughter and her generation pay for our generation's mistakes. I believe her generation should have the same morals and convictions. I respect the right for individuals to succeed, to work hard, to be rewarded and to be given the freedom and dignity to hold their own beliefs and ideals. I fully support the Campbell Newman government in focusing on the diversification of our economy by the implementation of the four-pillar economic policy. For too long we have relied on a single sector of our economy, which has left us vulnerable to overseas manufacturing demands. Focusing on the broader spectrum of tourism, agriculture, resources and construction will help the distribution of wealth throughout our economy and will create employment.

I quote: 'Government's view of the economy could be summed up in a few short phrases: if it moves, tax it; if it keeps moving, regulate it; and if it stops moving, subsidise it.' Small and medium businesses have long been the powerhouse for employment in our economy. For many years small businesses have suffered under increasing red tape and bureaucracy. Once again, this shows the clear differences in the philosophies of the political parties. Creating situations where clerical work is increased enormously is a recipe for inefficiencies and limits productivity. This is a recipe for disaster which only hinders economic development. Furthermore, allowing business to succeed only enhances the strength of our economy and creates additional employment.

A common trepidation which was expressed to me during the election campaign was in relation to the lack of police in the electorate. This is a common theme throughout the state but more so in the northern Gold Coast. We currently have one of the poorest ratios of police officers to residents. I was overjoyed when Campbell Newman announced that over the next four years his government will recruit 1,100 new police officers over and above attrition rates. At least 100 new officers will be allocated to the Logan and Gold Coast region. In addition to these numbers, the government will retrain 200 officers from behind desks to front-line duties. On behalf of multiple resident groups, Premier, I wish to thank you for your diligence on this matter. Furthermore, we have many more concerns that I wish to convey to this parliament at a later date to best represent the good people of the Albert electorate. I wish to thank the Premier and cabinet for producing a coherent plan to tackle multiple problems. I wish to thank the House for the courtesy its members have extended to me and I look forward to being a strong voice for Albert.