




Speech By
Kim Richards

MEMBER FOR REDLANDS

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MAIDEN SPEECH

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (4.54 pm): Mr Speaker, thank you for your support during my campaign. It was wonderful to have you visit the Redlands. I would like to begin by acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet, the Turrbal and Jagera people, and, in doing so, pay my respects to elders of all cultures—those past and those whose wisdom guide us into the future. I would also like to acknowledge the first people of my home, the Quandamooka people—one of the world's oldest living cultures—who have for over 20,000 years cared for the lands and seas of Redlands.

It is a great privilege to be in this place. I would like to express my deepest gratitude and thanks to the people of Redlands for allowing me the opportunity to represent their community. It is also an honour to be the first woman elected to represent the Redlands in the Queensland parliament. I am a proud Redlands woman and I am proud to be part of the Labor Palaszczuk team, with its abundance of strong and capable women.

I have had the great fortune to work with and learn from many amazing women, many inspiring women, on my journey so far—women like Elizabeth Watson-Brown, Caroline Stalker and the many women of the Australian Labor Party movement—all pioneers in their fields of expertise, cracking large at the glass ceiling in the pursuit of fairness and equality. We know that on our side of the House—and we only need to take a look around this chamber—our record in diversity is undeniable. I would like to acknowledge the incredible achievements of our Premier, Anastacia Palaszczuk, and Deputy Premier, Jackie Trad, and thank them for placing their trust in me. I will not let them or the people of Redlands down.

From the outset, to the people of Redlands—those who voted for me and those who did not—I reconfirm my commitment and my promise to them that I will be the strong voice our community deserves. I will listen, engage, work hard and fight for the needs of this growing region in this place and in my electorate. The people of Redlands have put their faith, hope and trust in me and the Labor team to continue to deliver for Queensland. I want them to know that I will always represent them in the best interests of our collective community. Those interests will be at the centre of my thoughts and in the heart of all of my activities and representation in this role as their member.

I believe a measure of one's success in this place is the legacy that is ultimately left behind. Whether I am here for this short term of two years and 10 months or if I am honoured to be here longer, the legacy that I will be working towards is one that I can be proud of, one that my family can be proud of, and, most importantly, one that my community can be proud of.

Five years ago, if people had asked me if I would be standing in this place as a member of parliament I would have said, 'Not likely,' and possibly thought they were a little crazy, because I have enjoyed a wonderful career in the architecture and design industry. It is an industry that, through good design, has the power to transform our cities and regions, creating better, stronger and more resilient communities. This week we are in the midst of the Asia Pacific Architecture Forum in Queensland and

I am looking forward to attending some of those events that are focused on how architecture and design will continue to contribute positively to shaping our future, both in Queensland and across the Asia Pacific. We have in Queensland incredible expertise in subtropical design that is ready for export now.

Over the past two decades, I have enjoyed working for two large architectural practices driving business operations that have delivered locally, nationally and internationally award-winning projects, such as the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre; Townsville's Museum of Tropical Queensland; Winton's Australian Age of Dinosaurs museum; the Kurilpa and Goodwill bridges; Singapore's Helix Bridge and its exhibition centre; the Brisbane Magistrates Court; the Queensland Gallery of Modern Art; the Sunshine Coast University Hospital; the Gold Coast Aquatic Centre and the Anna Meares Velodrome for the Commonwealth Games to name just a few.

When I finished up at the end of last year, projects underway included the rebuild of the Waltzing Matilda Museum in Winton that burnt down in a fire, the National Maritime Museum of China in Tianjin and the Townsville stadium that will be home to your favourite team, Mr Speaker, the North Queensland Cowboys—all transformative projects for their regions, projects and planning that promote, connect and deliver on economic development for their communities.

I have been asked why I would want to put myself forward, why would I want to be a politician. For me the era of the Newman LNP government delivered that answer. For me it was a government that lacked transparency and accountability and was not a government for the people. It was the experience of that government that made it apparent to me, and apparent to many Queenslanders, that if you want to see good government then you have to get involved, you have to be part of the conversation, you have to be part of the debate; you cannot just sit back and lament the unjust.

Not only was there an appalling level of public and front-line service personnel let go during that period but there was also an absolutely chaotic approach to decisions surrounding the drivers of Queensland business and our economy. It was extraordinary. I witnessed major projects, including for the regions, simply stop—put on the shelf. I recall one project in particular where investment from all three levels of government had been secured, and we in this place know how difficult that is. It involved significant dollars and with the stroke of a pen it was shelved, pushing the flush button on millions in taxpayer and ratepayer dollars that had already been expended.

It was this experience, experiencing what bad government was, that motivated me to stand up and ensure that I played my part in seeing good government prevail. That is the why, that is my motivation: to ensure that good, fair government prevails. I feel honoured to have been given the opportunity by the people of Redland to be part of what has been good, stable government under the Labor Palaszczuk team.

Redlands has the most vibrant community heart. My community is a collective of generous and kind-hearted people. I speak for them when I say that we are optimistic about our future and the potential that we offer. Before the campaign, during the campaign and since the election I have been blessed with the opportunity to engage with so many fabulous and dedicated people and organisations.

Redlands is home to generous community groups, service groups, sporting clubs and volunteer organisations. We have a thriving and thumping heart. Our environment is spectacular. We are a hidden gem that has for some time flown under the radar. We have pristine wetlands, beaches and a stunning natural environment. Our region has the largest coastal fringe of any Queensland local government area and it is a region that is in part remote and complex but in whole unique and beautiful.

Redlands, once referred to as the salad bowl of South-East Queensland with its fertile red soil, today is a region that is rapidly urbanising. The suburbs of Thornlands, Victoria Point and Redland Bay fringe the Moreton Bay coastline and are the gateway to the Southern Moreton Bay Islands of Macleay, Russell, Lamb, Karragarra and Coochiemudlo. Like other regions, and as spectacular as we are, we are not without our challenges.

Our mainland has continued to grapple with change from rural farmlands and shire thinking to a region that is urbanising and has become more city in its thinking. It is fair to say that over the past decade we have been challenged in planning well and managing our growth. That is why it is disappointing that Malcolm Turnbull and the federal government continues to let Queenslanders down. Not supporting key infrastructure projects such as Cross River Rail just means there is less money in the pot for regions like the Redlands. Traffic congestion and transport are key challenges in the Redlands, as is road infrastructure keeping pace with new developments and about 70 per cent of our employed community leaving the city bounds daily for work. Our rate of growth over the past 10 years has been greater than the Queensland average of 1.9 per cent at 2.6 per cent. It really speaks to our growing pains.

The Redlands Hospital services my community well, but it too is feeling the pressure of growth. When Malcolm Turnbull and the federal government are preparing to cut massive amounts of dollars and Queensland's share of the GST and do not want to pay their outstanding health debts, I know it will be hospitals like the Redlands that will suffer. I would implore our fifth-term federal MP, Andrew Laming, to work harder in securing our fair share for Queensland. Perhaps he could work a little harder than he did when photoshopping my head on top of Kim Jong-Un's body.

Our Redlands environment is our most significant asset and opportunity. As I said, with a coastline larger than any other local government area in Queensland, it offers opportunity but currently it suffers from a lack of community infrastructure and waterfront activation. When we look up and down the coast, we see that Cairns has its Esplanade, Townsville has its Strand, Yeppoon has its new foreshore underway, and Redcliffe, Wynnum, Manly and the Broadwater Parklands are all exemplars of celebrating their waterfront environments. Redlands needs more community infrastructure and Weinam Creek in Redland Bay certainly offers that potential. What could be a spectacular gateway to our Redlands coast and its island gems currently looks a little bit like a used car parking lot. We can and we must do better to ensure that Redlands is a destination on everybody's list.

Island living is a dream but it too has its challenges. Our islands are only accessible by traversing the magnificent Moreton Bay. This remoteness and complexity in connection creates a number of challenges to residential island living for our 10,000 locals living on the islands and to their tourism potential. Ferries, barges, boat ramps, entry and exit points and access to services are all challenges in an island context.

Last week I had the chance to check out the new autonomous vehicles being trialled in Cleveland. These are currently being used in cities around the world like Singapore, at Marina Bay. These shifts in technologies are opportunities for the Redlands. They provide remote locations with the chance to think differently about how transport and service problems can be solved with technological advancement.

Without wanting to sound too repetitive, I want to make sure my message is clear: Redlands presents an enormous opportunity to broader South-East Queensland, particularly with our state's focus on tourism as a key pillar of the economy. Moreton Bay and its islands are the heart of Quandamooka country comprised of offshore reefs, internationally significant wetlands, seagrass meadows and sandy beaches. These make our region a haven for wildlife and a haven for people. Our bay and its islands hold significant importance in Queensland's history and we love our annual celebration of Matthew Flinders' landing on Coochie.

We present Queensland's most significant cultural and ecotourism potential. We are less than 30 minutes from Brisbane's airport and the Port of Brisbane. We are an authentic Queensland tourism potential. We can play our part in servicing the additional 1.4 million tourists that Brisbane is expecting by 2022 with the completion of Queen's Wharf, which we know is set to transform the Brisbane CBD, and those arriving on the back of the success of the Commonwealth Games, which we know is only 11 short sleeps away.

Our local economy is currently underpinned by construction, teachers, retailers and hospitality as the top four industries of employment. We need to grow our local economy and local jobs. Naturally fitting industries like tourism, film, creative industries, education, health and environment all offer genuine potential in the Redlands. We are any investor or business's dream with the ability to deliver on a coastal lifestyle where you can work, live and play. We are experiencing some of these opportunities now, but we must be vigilant in continuing to position ourselves. We have emerging industries like the film industry and it was fantastic to meet last week with the local Cleveland Film Company that is just starting up out in the Redlands.

My region and its stunning coastal environment is in the top five Queensland locations for filming. Again, this time I want to be clear on the repetition: it is disappointing that Malcolm Turnbull and the federal government did not support *Dora the Explorer* and our efforts to grow the film industry here in Queensland which we know is a vital area of jobs growth both here in Queensland and for the Redlands. Our shores have been host to international blockbusters that include *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales*; DC Comics *Aquaman*; *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*; Angelina Jolie's *Unbroken*; and we are just about ready for Netflix's *Tidelands* series, which will be filmed in various locations across the Redlands.

As members have heard, there is an awful lot to be excited about in the Redlands. My very wise friend now passed, Peter Hale, who I had the joy of working with for many years, would constantly remind me that challenges were only an opportunity to think better, create better and deliver better. I know that I will be working hard day in, day out to find solutions to the complex challenges we face. Redlands is a distinctive thread in the fabric of South-East Queensland. We have a magnificent environment and an enviable lifestyle and we offer huge potential waiting to be harnessed.

As we all in this place know, it is the incredible team behind each of us that sees us here today. To my team, and there are many of them here in the gallery today, thank you for your support, enthusiasm, for rallying when needed and cheering loudly and proudly. Without your ongoing support and friendship I could not have achieved this result. We talked, we sang, we stood, we sat, we were rained on, we were sunburnt, we bowled, we doorknocked, we waved, we had early mornings and late evenings, copious cups of coffee, numerous ferry rides, we played trivia with various degrees of success and we listened, but most importantly we connected with our Redlands community.

There are so many people to thank. An army of 150 volunteers helped on pre-poll and election days at 11 booths. If I have forgotten anybody, I apologise now and I thank you from the bottom of my heart. It was the Redlands Labor branch at its finest. Special thanks go to Gael and Mike Ewer, who are stalwarts of the Labor Party movement. I pay special tribute to Mike's dad, Harold, who sadly passed away two weeks ago at the age of 100. Late last year I got to share his 100th birthday with him. What a fabulous life he led.

To Tony, Alex and Pat Newman: seriously, I do not know where to start. For sharing your wife and mum with me and for digging deep across the campaign, thank you again, from the bottom of my heart. To Stephanie and Mike Morris: you are simply incredible. We had very unattractive 3 am starts to nab pole position on the roadside. It is lucky that we love the early mornings as much as Andrew Laming did, although he was not the candidate. Stephanie, I am indeed lucky to have you on my team.

I thank our Young Labor team. Jasper Every stepped up as my field organiser. Jasper, you are an inspiration and one to watch out for in the future. Thanks also go to Kathryn for sharing her son with me and for her help. Jasper, I am grateful for your ongoing support, passion and enthusiasm to grow our Labor movement in the Redlands and the important values that we stand for.

To MacGregor Cross and Col Hubbard, you both have an incredible depth of talent and phone manners that would be the envy of many. I thank Andrew and Jill Aitkin. Jill, we have managed to lose an unknown passion for roadside campaigning. Thank you to you both. To Trevor Surplice and Pat and Irvine Sommerville: thank you for your support. Pat, your fundraising efforts were fantastic.

To Sheena and Lance Hewlett, my deep and sincere thanks for your support and friendship. To Linda White and Di Thompson: your extraordinary and deep passion for making our community great is second to none. A special thanks goes to Doreen Awabdy. To Mike Williamson, Shiannon and Mark Corcoran, Sylvia and Laurie Vella, Yvonne, Linda, Lindsay, Ellie, Paula, Dee and Shirley: thank you for your ongoing support, care and friendship.

I am continually thankful for the ongoing friendship, support and island knowledge of Tanja and Brad Gooj and David Cross from Macleay Island. I take this moment to also acknowledge David's wife, Anne Cross, who was a tremendous Labor stalwart of the islands and who sadly passed away over Christmas. To David I offer my most sincere condolences. Anne will be sadly missed by our Labor Party.

To Yvonne Beckett, Margaret Kemp, Rose Doyle, Evelyn Dowling, Keith Mills and Ian Larkman of Russell Island: your passion is incredible and I thank you for your support. To Tony Gilson: you are the Lamb Island Lone Ranger, single-handedly managing the booth and I thank you. I thank the wonderful Keith Stebbins, Margaret Giles, Anne Wright and Marg Anderson from Coochie: you guys are legends.

A huge thank you goes to my neighbours Don Brown—I would not be here today without his support—and Mick de Brenni, as well as to Evan Moorhead, Sharon Humphreys, Adam Obeid, Jules Campbell and senators Claire Moore, Murray Watt and Anthony Chisholm. Their wisdom, advice and guidance continue to be invaluable.

Our campaign was honest and grassroots. It was wonderful to see members from the entire Bowman branch come together. I think what sets Labor apart, not only here in Queensland but also across Australia—we are a party that is united. Thank you to those who also took time out from the other campaigns. I was pinching them a little bit, at times. Thank you nonetheless to Irene Henley, Jesse and Kim McNamara, Alex Smock, Tony Sweet, Merv and Hang King, Richard Andrews, Alan Roache, Mark and Tracey Huges, Anne-Maree, Kathryn and James Allan. Thank you all so much.

The amazing team at United Voice have been incredible supporters. I thank Gary Bulloch, Sharon Caddie, Sheila Hunter, Hannah, Samarah, Jane, Liz, Kelly, Ray, Lucas, Chris, Isaac and, of course, the amazing Jeanette Temperley. Jeanette, we really did not know the journey that lay ahead of us in 2015 over that cup of coffee. I hope you are proud of what you have unleashed. I know that I am proud to be part of a union that day in, day out is working for Queenslanders to create better lives through better employment conditions and wages, which we sometimes take for granted. Thanks also to the FSU for their support.

To my former colleagues—some here in the chamber today, Richard, Brendan, Tim, Philip and Patrick: thank you for your patience, your flexibility and your support. I could not have done this without you, either. The year of 2017 was very big for us all. Thank you to my dear friends and unwavering supporters, Sandy and Rob Box, Penny, Mark and the whole Lindsay family, Christina, Rei and Mrs Cho, Desi, Alice, Tanya, Karen and Casey Vallance, and a special shout out to Eskimo the samoyed, our office dog. He was indeed a big hit wherever he went in his big bright red T-shirt.

As everyone in this House knows, the support and love of your family is essential. Therefore, to my mum, Lynne, watching from home, my son, Luke, and partner, Shayne: words do not express how thankful I am for your love and support as I continue to take you all on this sometimes crazy but nonetheless exciting journey with me. To my son, Luke: I know you are watching this on Parliament.TV in Sydney. You are my proudest achievement. For a young man, your kindness, your lens of fairness and caring for others inspires me and will be how I continue to approach every day as the member for Redlands.

To Mum and Shayne: you both have the patience of saints, for which I am eternally grateful. The three of you know that I could not have achieved this result without you behind me, supporting me, barracking for me and working with me. You are my rocks.

I thank my sister, Rachael, and nieces, Jessica and Jodie in Cairns. Your support was great. Like me, my sister loves to have a chat and was great on the phones. I thank her. Thanks also to my extended family in Melbourne for their long-distance cheering. My dad, who was my best friend, instilled in me the importance of a strong work ethic and a spirit of generosity. Dad, I know that you would be proud and that you are smiling down from the stars.

Last and by no means least, my most heartfelt and deepest thanks go to my friend and mentor, my campaign manager, Meredith Newman. Meredith is in the gallery, with me in the chamber today. It is rare to find someone so special, someone who cares so deeply and someone who selflessly invests in getting the best for others. Meredith, you and your family hold a special place in my heart. Meredith took three months long service leave to manage my campaign. I thank her for her sheer dedication and belief in me. Meredith was there with me every step of the way. She was there lifting me up when I was low, guiding me when I was unsure and celebrating with me on the highs. All my love, Meredith, and thank you.

Finally, and to finish where I started, thank you again to the people of Redlands for your faith and trust in me. I promise I will not let you down. Together we are going to continue to forge a strong community and work together to leave an amazing legacy for our children and future generations in Queensland.