



Speech By
Dr Christian Rowan

MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

Record of Proceedings, 17 May 2018

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Phillips, Ms J

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (2.36 pm): I rise as the Liberal-National Party shadow minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and the state member for Moggill to acknowledge an inspiring and active constituent in my electorate of Moggill. Over the past three years my office staff and I have formed a close professional relationship with Aboriginal Christian leader Aunty Jean Phillips, who works through the Anglican Church across Queensland, specifically in a number of areas of western and southern Brisbane. Aunty Jean has great insights into the range of issues that face our Indigenous communities both here in Queensland and also across Australia.

I was honoured to be asked by Aunty Jean Phillips to say a few words in relation to my shadow ministerial portfolio of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships at the 2018 Australia Day reconciliation service at Surfers Paradise in January this year followed by supper where I met with a number of Indigenous members of the church community. It was terrific to also attend this event with the shadow minister for multicultural affairs and shadow minister for the Commonwealth Games, the member for Surfers Paradise, John-Paul Langbroek MP.

Aunty Jean is an advocate for Common Grace, an established independent worldwide movement made up of thousands of Christians who together believe that things can be different and who are committed to seeking social justice for all through good Christian practice. In Australia, where their membership has reached some 30,000 Christians, the work of Common Grace involves many diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Common Grace's vision is to see true reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. The founding director, Jarrod McKenna, has undertaken to work through Aboriginal Christian leaders such as Aunty Jean to deal with many issues of concern including domestic violence. The ongoing work of Common Grace relies on different traditions to enable them to comprehend and assist with what they have to say about justice before they are able to engage more broadly with local communities.

Members of Common Grace utilise resources and tools to help them act for justice without neglecting the responsibilities they have to their own families, friends, work colleagues and church communities. Until now, Common Grace has relied heavily on donations from private individuals and church sources with supplementation by small grants. However, more sources of funding are needed to enable them to continue the work. The various Australia Day reconciliation services are some of the events that Common Grace have organised this year and more such functions are planned in an endeavour to spread the word throughout Queensland and Australia.

Another area Common Grace is involved in is assisting people from other countries seeking asylum in Australia where their Christian religious faith has put them at risk of harm or persecution. They are working to build a greater media profile to get their message out to the broader community. I certainly know there is more that various governments can do to assist them.

There is a lot of work still to be done by all of us to address these issues. I am certainly prepared to do what I can to bring about change and to offer my full support to Aunty Jean and the work that she and many others do for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Queenslanders and Australians.