

3 December 2008

ADJOURNMENT

Lindsay Electorate: Mr Pat Sheehy AM and Mr Alan Travers

Mr BRADBURY (Lindsay) (7:35 p.m.) — I rise to pay tribute to two individuals who have devoted much of their lives to the service of local government and to the city of Penrith. Mr Pat Sheehy AM and Mr Alan Travers, who are in the gallery this evening with their wives Lorraine and Wanda, are two significant figures in the history of the city of Penrith. Between them, they have served local government for more than 60 years, and they have spent a large proportion of that time working to advance the city of Penrith.

Up until his retirement in September 2008, Pat Sheehy represented the residents of the north ward on Penrith City Council continuously from the time of his election as an alderman in 1987. Pat served as the Mayor of Penrith for three terms, in 1994-95, 2001-2 and 2006-7, and as the Chair of the Labor Caucus on Council between 1995 and 2008. In his 21 years on the council, Pat helped to steer Penrith through a significant period of growth. The city's population increased by 50,000 over this period, with Penrith realising its destiny as a regional city and becoming a focal point for jobs and investment in Western Sydney. Pat has been a member of the Australian Labor Party for 47 years and embodies all of the great and enduring qualities of the Labor tradition. Pat is hard headed, a straight talker, a tough negotiator and a man with a passion for equity, justice and the advancement of working people. He is a man who has never been afraid to make the hard decisions where matters of principle are involved.

Pat is driven by a sense of social justice and an understanding of the importance of assisting those in need of a helping hand. Pat has always been motivated by the need to create and expand opportunities to all by investing in the talent, creativity and enterprise of the residents of Penrith City. Whenever a council debate seemed to reach an impasse, Pat could be relied upon to draw upon his experience as both a science teacher and a school principal to inject both logic and authority into the debate to break the stalemate. On these occasions, Pat's leadership and debating skills were a delight to witness and learn from. I would also like to acknowledge Lorraine for supporting Pat in his public role. Lorraine regularly accompanied Pat to official functions and, as much as she enjoyed sharing these occasions with Pat, I know she is glad to have him all to herself now in retirement.

Alan Travers retired as the General Manager of Penrith City Council in July this year after 10 years in that role and 40 years working in local government. Alan has always been a man passionate about his community and excited about its potential. Over the past decade, Penrith City Council planned for the development of more than 10,000 new residential lots and for the provision of important physical and social infrastructure to support this rapid growth. Alan's leadership of the council organisation helped Penrith navigate through these crucial years of development, which culminated with recognition of the city's role as a regional city. Alan was instrumental in guiding the construction and management of the two Olympic facilities in Penrith, the International Regatta Centre and the Penrith Whitewater Stadium, for the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games. His emphasis on accountability, transparency and sound fiscal management, coupled with his passion for high-quality service delivery, has helped to foster in the Penrith community a trust and faith in their council that is rarely seen.



Penrith council now has a Standard and Poor's AA+ credit rating, which is an enviable commodity in the context of the current global financial crisis. Alan's legacy is one of strong financial leadership, a clear vision for the city's future and a commitment to a vibrant and socially cohesive community. As a career public servant, Alan's commitment to implementing the program determined by the elected representatives of the day, regardless of their political colours, demonstrated his integrity and professionalism. His leadership inspired a 'can do' culture throughout the organisation he led. Alan is now succeeded by another man of great capacity in Mr Alan Stoneham, who I know will continue the great work of his predecessor. Alan has been fortunate to enjoy the love and support of his wife, Wanda. In her own right, Wanda is a wonderful person, and I wish her and Alan all the best in retirement.

As a former mayor and councillor on Penrith council for nine years, I had the pleasure of working closely with both Pat and Alan. I am privileged to count them both as friends and mentors. To Pat and Alan, thank you for your years of dedication and service, and congratulations on the legacies you both leave behind. Your legacies live on in the physical environment and the social fabric of the Penrith community.