



The Hon David Bradbury MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR LINDSAY

Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer

21 October 2010

Main Committee

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Lindsay Electorate: Anti-Poverty Week

Mr BRADBURY (Lindsay) (Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer) (9.39 AM) I rise to take note of some of the local organisations in my community who are helping to alleviate the pressures facing those who are most vulnerable. In Australia, with our high standard of living, we do not often consider it possible that people could be living in poverty—yet poverty is a daily reality for many Australians. There are pensioners, young people, families and Indigenous Australians for whom it is a struggle to make ends meet. There are people in communities like mine for whom taking time off work due to illness could mean that they do not make their mortgage repayments, for whom having to pay to repair a broken washing machine means they do not eat for a week, or for whom it becomes impossible to find private accommodation because they cannot save up money for a rental bond.

These are the people who become isolated from the broader community, who fall through the cracks in our health and our education systems, and who often suffer from the debilitating effects of family breakdown, mental illness and homelessness. But these are the people who a number of committed organisations in my community are working with to overcome the enormous disadvantages that they face. I had the great honour last Friday of joining representatives from Unions New South Wales, local businesses and a large number of community stakeholders to launch Anti-Poverty Week. We joined together to help with the refurbishment of Fusion Accommodation and Support Services' youth facilities at St Marys. It was a great pleasure to lend a helping hand and apply a fresh coat of paint to their new premises at the St Marys Band Club, which has been supporting Fusion. I would like to particularly thank Mary Yaager at Unions New South Wales, and also the Penrith council for their assistance on the day.

I have had a long association with Fusion, and I am a great believer in their work. I would like to acknowledge all of the staff and volunteers at Fusion, and in particular the Chief Executive, Dave Hammond, who brings an amazing passion to the organisation. Amongst their many activities, Fusion work directly with people at risk of homelessness. They take in individuals and families who are at risk of homelessness and help to integrate them into safe and independent living. But they are also innovators in the way they engage the community. They draw on a network of dedicated volunteers and tradespeople, who undertake renovations and refurbishments to the homes of the elderly and the disabled. They also work with vulnerable young people and families, Indigenous Australians and isolated individuals to deliver education programs, mentoring, support for domestic violence and other services.

I would like to acknowledge some of the people involved in this initiative. The United Way Penrith Valley Fund is a grassroots fundraising group that is supported by Penrith Press. I acknowledge Simone Cody, Pastor Martin Beckett and Richard Eastmead for their enthusiastic support and advocacy of the program. It was a great privilege to be involved in this initiative and I wish Fusion and other stakeholders working towards the alleviation of homelessness all the best into the future.