



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Federation Chamber

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Blair Electorate: Sport

SPEECH

Tuesday, 24 March 2015

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Questioner
Speaker Neumann, Shayne, MP

Source House
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Mr NEUMANN (Blair) (16:02): The former federal Labor government left a lasting legacy of improved community infrastructure across the electorate of Blair, from the \$500,000 for the Toogoolawah Cultural Precinct, the state-of-the-art arts precinct in the northern part of the electorate, to Studio 188 in the old Baptist Church in the arts precinct in Ipswich central—an area that we call the 'top of town'. In 2013 I was delighted when the then federal Labor government announced funding of \$15 million to help create a new community sports and recreation precinct at Springfield adjacent to the south-east corner of Blair for the Brisbane Lions. I fought hard for the funding alongside Bernie Ripoll, the member for Oxley. The Ipswich City Council and Springfield Land Corporation backed the project. The Brisbane Lions' new world-class training and administration facility was to be the heartbeat and centrepiece of the \$60 million precinct. I remember standing with Catherine King, the member for Ballarat, who was Labor's minister for regional Australia, and Bernie Ripoll at the funding announcement in Springfield. The funding was announced and budgeted for in the May 2013 budget under Regional Development Australia funding. Unfortunately, in MYEFO in late 2013 the Abbott government ripped away \$15 million from Blair and Oxley, and now the Brisbane Lions have had to pull out of that particular project.

However, the Ipswich City Council is backing the bid to bring a Western Corridor rugby league team to our region. In fact, they are calling on the federal and state governments to support a new NRL team in the western corridor. Springfield, with excellent access to Ipswich, Logan and Brisbane, is the perfect location for an elite NRL training facility. It is clear the western corridor deserves a NRL team. With the support of Logan and Toowoomba, Ipswich's bid should be accepted. I say to NRL CEO, David Smith, what I said to his predecessor: it is time for Ipswich's bid. Ipswich was one of the first teams in the Queensland rugby league in 1909. Ipswich won the competition in 1910. Ipswich gave the rugby league world Alfie Langer and the Walters brothers, and, at one stage, the whole of the front row of the Australian rugby league team came from Ipswich.

There are 3,500 juniors playing rugby league in Ipswich, and we have great teams like Brothers, Fassifern, Goodna and District, Karalee, Laidley, Lowood, Norths Tigers, Redbank Plains, Rosewood, Springfield, West End Bulldogs and my favourite team, the team I played for as a kid, the Swifts Bluebirds. Ipswich is a rugby league incubator. I am a sponsor of Ipswich Rugby League and the Ipswich Jets Intrust Super Cup team, and I sponsor Ipswich State High School's dance students, who are the cheer squad for the Ipswich Jets team. It is time the Western Corridor got an NRL team and it is time the NRL supported the Western Corridor bid.