



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Canberra Electorate: Soldier On

SPEECH

Wednesday, 18 March 2015

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Speaker Brodtmann, Gai, MP	Question No.

Ms BRODTMANN (Canberra) (13:30): It is with great pleasure that I rise today to congratulate Soldier On on its relocation and on the reopening of the Robert Poate Reintegration and Recovery Centre. Yesterday I joined with my colleague the member for Batman as well as the assistant minister, the Chief of the Defence Force, the Deputy Chief of Air Force, and the Chief of Army at the official reopening of the new centre in Crace. It was in a stunning old building—an 1860s building; we do not see many of those in Canberra these day. It was great to see the charity receiving so much support from across the Defence community and across the Canberra community.

The new headquarters were opened by the Governor-General, who has been a tremendous supporter of Soldier On since its inception. Soldier On has grown from an entity launched in a tent about five years ago. I was there at that launch in the tent, just down the road, where the Canberra Services Club used to be located. From that early and very, very small start, it has now grown into an extraordinary institution with top-notch facilities. The way in which the organisation has grown over the past five years is a testament to the positive impact it is having on returning soldiers and those who have left the service to deal with their wounds, their PTSD and other issues. But the charity does not just help the soldiers; it supports their families, too—like the parents of Robert Poate, Hugh and Janny, who were there today, and Hugh Poate made an incredibly powerful speech. It was great to hear how they are also engaging with Soldier On to provide them with support and to help them heal the wounds from the loss of their son. (*Time expired*)