



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Federation Chamber

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Leichhardt Electorate: Rigby, Mr Flynn

SPEECH

Thursday, 15 May 2014

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Questioner
Speaker Entsch, Warren, MP

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Mr ENTSCH (Leichhardt) (10:19): I rise to highlight this story of a very special young lad in my electorate, Flynn Rigby. At just 11 years of age, Flynn has had a very challenging life. He was born a surviving twin at 22 weeks, in November 2002. As he developed he was unable to speak and was diagnosed with autism. I became involved with Flynn in 2011, when his mum and dad, Jenni and Frazer, started fundraising to take Flynn to China for groundbreaking stem cell treatment which was not available in Australia. The community rallied strongly and together we helped to raise more than \$40,000. Flynn flew to China in November 2011 for the first treatment and the results were absolutely remarkable. From being able to speak only one-syllable words, Flynn rapidly progressed. A year later he was speaking in sentences, chatting away with people, drawing, writing, reading and telling the time.

Now Flynn's family is fundraising again to take him for a second round of treatment later this year. They need to get this treatment in before his teenage years. The target is \$30,000 and the donations are sitting at around \$12,000 at the moment. A major fundraising event, an auction night at Yorkeys Knob Boating Club, is coming up on Saturday, 31 May. Although I cannot be there for the event, I certainly want to show my support for Flynn and his wonderful family.

We have some fabulous businesses in Cairns. They really go the extra mile when people need a bit of a hand, donating items and vouchers. I have done some ringing around and with a bit of creativity have decided to put myself under the hammer. As a package, my wonderful and beautiful wife, Yolonde, and I are hoping to raise a very significant chunk of cash for Flynn's cause by organising a night out with us for two people. The evening will start with the winning bidders being picked up in a stretch limousine, thanks to the wonderful services of Coral Sneddon and Sue Bartlett from Cairns Limousine Services. We will enjoy a bottle of champagne on the way to Palm Cove, where we will have a delicious meal at the highly awarded Beach Almond restaurant, owned by Brian and Sarah Holding. We will then drop the bidders home in the limo. I urge anybody who wants this unique opportunity to take advantage of it and at the same time enjoy the hospitality of Cairns Limousine Services and Beach Almond. We will certainly have a wonderful night.

It is a fabulous cause. I know that it is going to make a huge difference for young Flynn. As he moves into his teenage years, I think it is absolutely critical that we give this young lad the best possible opportunity to reach his potential. I have no doubt at all that raising this money, hitting that \$30,000 target, will give Flynn the best chance he has in his life.