

5.3 Recognising a Career Well Served

Recommendation

That the information be noted.

On Friday 8 September 2023, The Hon. Senator Marise Payne announced her retirement from Federal politics, a role she has devotedly served for 26 years.

During her long and decorated career, Marise has held a number of important senior roles, including Minister for Foreign Affairs, Defence, Women and Human Services. She is also the longest serving female Senator in Australia's history and has been a tireless advocate for the rights and opportunities of women.

Senator Payne was affectionately known as the Senator for Western Sydney. She was a passionate advocate for the West, and in particular was unwavering in her commitment to advocate and support the needs of our community. In her farewell speech, she acknowledged the important role of Western Sydney as the most diverse and dynamic region in our nation.

As a key figure in the former Federal Government, Marise and the Cabinet supported the delivery of a number of critical infrastructure projects for our city, and Marise would regularly visit Campbelltown to celebrate these announcements and project milestones.

It was not uncommon to see Marise out on site for progress visits, donning a hard hat and speaking with staff and contractors about progress and to truly understand the complexity and importance of some of these projects.

In particular, Marise was instrumental in the provision of funding for the Wedderburn Bridge, to ensure the safety of some of our most isolated residents. This was a highly complex project, providing safe access for our residents during times of flood and fire, and navigating the complex environmental location, while also paying respects to its important cultural history.

She was also a driving force between securing significant funding for Badgally Road and strengthening the important East/West connections across our city and in recent times, lending her support to the Campbelltown Sports Centre of Excellence.

Marise played a key role in the development of the Western Sydney City Deal, one of the largest and most complex Deals of its kind. Under this Deal, the Liveability program was developed and led to the funding of key projects across the 8 signatory Councils to improve the lives of their residents, including the creation of the Billabong Parklands here in Campbelltown.

Senator Payne has also been a strong campaigner and advocate for the South West Community and Justice Precinct, an important piece of social infrastructure that would bring higher order jobs and investment to our city centre, along with greater access to family law services for those across our region. Marise is passionate about job-generating infrastructure, economic growth and human rights, all attributes that the realisation of this once in a generation project would contribute to.

She has led her portfolios with distinction and her resilience was regularly on show through times of both turmoil and unprecedented challenges. She faced these challenges head on, always putting the people of NSW first.

Her achievements across her diverse portfolios are widely documented and of significant national importance, such as establishing the AUKUS partnership, navigating complex negotiations with our international partners, strengthening our defence capabilities and leading significant improvements to our Human Services payments infrastructure system.

Despite holding some of the most complex portfolios in Government, Marise always made time for Campbelltown and Western Sydney, an incredible testament to her professionalism and integrity. Her commitment to democracy was clearly evident in everything she did, never shying away from contentious issues and always acting as a model representative in the Senate.

On behalf of myself and the community of Campbelltown, I would like to congratulate Marise on her stellar career and thank her for all she has done for Campbelltown, Western Sydney and our country. I wish her all the best for the future and thank her for her service.

Attachments

Nil