



# **Danna Vale MP**

## **Federal Member for Hughes**



4 August 2009

### **STATEMENT BY DANNA VALE MP, FEDERAL MEMBER FOR HUGHES**

It is with great regret that after long discussions with my husband Bob and my family, I have decided not to nominate for preselection as the Liberal candidate to contest the seat of Hughes at the next Federal election.

I wish to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all my constituents in Hughes for their continued support over the last “almost” 15 years. It has been an honour and a privilege to have represented their interests and concerns in the Federal Parliament during this time.

During Mr. Keating’s “recession we had to have”, I had friends who were small business people who lost their homes. Many still recall those commercial lending rates which hit 27% in some cases. Back in 1996, I wanted to make a positive difference and am proud to look back on those Howard/Costello years, those golden years, and know that my fellow Australians enjoyed a time of great prosperity and solid economic growth that were underpinned by sound economic principles.

On a personal note, it has been an honour and a privilege for me to be in a position to really make a positive difference for other Australians as well as those in my own local area. Some of these issues include

- leading the successful local community campaign against the proposed Holsworthy Airport;
- knowing that I was able to prevent a nuclear waste processing plant at Lucas Heights;
- taking the credit or the blame, depending on your point of view, for the creation of ARPANSA (Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency);
- lobbying successfully, along with local resident Judi Stevens, for amendments to the taxation legislation to allow structured settlements in compensation payouts for accident victims;
- knowing that the new “Kokoda Field” near Harris Creek in the Hammondville Sporting Fields complex, plus \$750,000 in funding for Liverpool Council to develop the field, is there because of my efforts;
- standing against mandatory sentencing as it was then practiced in the Northern Territory in 2000, I was able to secure \$20m from the Government for juvenile diversionary programs and, importantly, interpreter services for the people in the Northern Territory.

- As Minister for Veterans' Affairs (2001-2004) the Budget for the care and support of our veterans, war widows and their families increased from \$8bn during my tenure to \$10bn; and finally but not least,
- Also as Minister for Veterans, after long consultation with Defence personnel and the veteran community, I had the personal privilege to steer through the Parliament the new Military Rehabilitation and Compensation legislation, which now provides protection for those servicemen and women who continue the Anzac tradition. This legislation was a personal focus for me. My grandfather's name is on the Menin Gate. My grandmother was a WWI war widow and raised my mother in poverty and hardship.

Having successfully contested the seat of Hughes for the Liberal Party in five successive elections since 1996, including the 'tough GST' election of 1998 when Hughes was the only seat in Australia to sustain a swing to the government, I will really miss not being there to fight the good fight once again.

My warm appreciation is extended to my colleagues and fellow members of Parliament, on both sides of the House, with whom I have shared many friendships and enjoyed the privilege of working towards the advancement of our country.

My thanks goes to my dedicated staff, including those who worked in my ministerial office during those years; and my office volunteers; my many supporters both inside and outside the electorate; to my dear friends and my family, especially my long suffering husband and best mate, Bob.

Most especially, I wish to warmly and respectfully thank my constituents in Hughes; those wonderful Australians who placed their trust in me to serve them back in 1996 to be their public voice and to be here to help them.

We all know that individual politicians can't change the world, but I have learned that I can change the world for one person. Indeed, many of my constituents tell me that I have been able to do just that for them. Finding solutions for people is the real buzz in being a Member of Parliament. And I have been so lucky as the Member for Hughes, because the very best people in Australia all live in my electorate, and I am going to miss engaging with them.

God bless you all, and God bless Australia.

**DANNA VALE MP**  
**FEDERA MEMBER FOR HUGHES**