



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**PROOF**

**Main Committee**

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

**Australian Arts Community**

**SPEECH**

**Monday, 21 February 2011**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

<p><b>Date</b> Monday, 21 February 2011  <b>Page</b> 183  <b>Questioner</b>  <b>Speaker</b> Sidebottom, Sid, MP</p>	<p><b>Source</b> House  <b>Proof</b> Yes  <b>Responder</b>  <b>Question No.</b></p>
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**Mr SIDEBOTTOM** (Braddon) (6.38 pm)—I congratulate the members for Moreton and Riverina for their contributions. To be able to talk about the arts is a fantastic thing. We do not do enough of it in this parliament. I say to the Member for Moreton, to be criticised by some journalist for appearing to be flippant with this motion totally misses the point. I love the arts. I think if I had my life again, if I had enough talent, I would devote it to the arts. I might not be very rich in terms of money but I would certainly be very rich in terms of the spirit. In fact, I am currently directing my 16th musical, and I look forward to that going on in budget week whilst trying to match all the other responsibilities I have.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Tasmanian Regional Arts. It plays an important role in supporting both regional and community based arts practices in my home state of Tasmania. The organisation is unique in that it is the only state-wide arts service organisation in Australia funded by the Australian government's Australia Council that is located in a regional centre—indeed, in the historic township of Latrobe, in my electorate of Braddon.

As a membership driven organisation, Tasmanian Regional Arts aims to excite and inspire regional communities through its work. The Tasmanian Regional Arts program of activities in 2011 is significant for what it does with limited resources. For example, the organisation provides information and advocacy support services; delivers an access and touring program to a wide variety of non-managed community run venues throughout Tassie; provides information and community arts support staff in our three major locations throughout Tasmania; and administers the important Commonwealth Regional Arts Fund.

In 2010 TRA brilliantly proved it could also produce significant arts products when it staged the seventh Regional Arts Australia national conference in Launceston. This conference, the largest arts conference in Australia, also played host to the Junction Arts Festival, where more than 47 major exhibitions, performances and activities engaged the host community and visitor alike and provided an economic boost of nearly \$3 million to Tasmania's regional economy.

Tasmanian Regional Arts intends to continue to develop on the Junction 2010 legacy in the state's north through future participatory arts festivals of the highest calibre. Tasmanian Regional Arts plays a key role in the delivery of Commonwealth support to the regions through its management of the Regional Arts Fund. Indeed, this program supports local and regional artists to access resources through a three-tiered program of assistance that is both relevant and cost-effective in its delivery. I have been advised through representations from Tasmania Regional Arts that through its national agency, Regional Arts Australia, the organisation believes the current delivery mechanisms for the fund through the state agencies is a preferred delivery model for the fund and that the Regional Arts Fund, along with other programs such as Playing Australia and Festivals Australia continue to be delivered under current arrangements.

Tasmanian Regional Arts recognises the need to diversify and expand its income and revenue streams in response to the limitations facing all levels of government in supporting the arts. I strongly commend TRA for its success in securing a broad range of state and local government partnerships, as well as significant philanthropic support and sponsorship for its program of activities. Through the delivery of initiatives such as the Regional Arts Fund, ongoing festival and event developments, a strong and creative touring program and the provision of the regional arts development offices, Tasmanian Regional Arts has played and continues to play a significant role in arts and cultural development across my state. I thank TRA for the excellent work it does on what is a limited budget.

Finally, I would like to thank all of those artists in Australia who provide entertainment and their skills for us. Indeed, they are a conscience and a mirror of what makes Australia what it is. I would like to thank in particular all those artists who live in regional Australia and provide their services and their skills to those of us in regional Australia. I know regional Australia is very much like where I live: very talented people enjoying their lifestyle

and supporting their communities. We, as the government, should do all we can to support them and to make their job a lot easier. I thank them for their contribution.