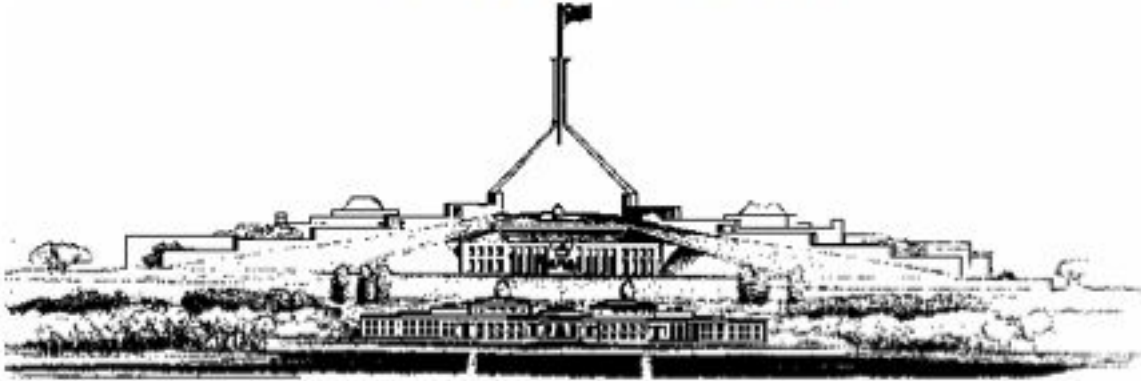




COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PROOF

Federation Chamber

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Men's Shed Movement

SPEECH

Monday, 7 December 2020

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

Date Monday, 7 December 2020	Source House
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Questioner	Responder
Speaker O'Brien, Ted, MP	Question No.

Mr TED O'BRIEN (Fairfax) (16:31): In 2006, when civic participation in Australia dropped to 18.6 per cent, many in this country cried that we were seeing a crisis of civil society. Only two weeks ago the *Weekend Australian* reported on ABS data that civic participation has now dropped to 9.4 per cent. That's fewer than one in 10 Australians participating in community organisations. I raise this today firstly to acknowledge that there is an issue but secondly to pay tribute to one organisation: the men's shed movement. Today the chair and executive director of the Australian Men's Shed Association are here in parliament.

The organisation of sheds swim against the tide. At a time when community organisations are struggling, they are booming. They are growing. They are mushrooming across the country. They do this because they have a unique operating model. They deal with issues of social inclusion and men's mental health, but they don't do so by hanging a shingle outside every men's shed, saying: 'Got a mental health problem? Come on in.' They do it in a way which is simple and engaging with everyday blokes, and full credit to them. May civil society continue to rebuild and may men's sheds be a shining light for that rebuilding.