

VINCENZO LA GALIA — TRIBUTE

Statement

HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the House) [8.36 pm]: I want to make some comments, following the President's statement earlier today, about the passing of Vince La Galia, a longstanding member of the parliamentary staff. The President outlined to everybody his history, so I will not go over it. I want to pay tribute to him because I could not attend his funeral last week. He was literally an institution in this place. He was a very happy, cheerful and charming institution in this place. He was sadly missed when he retired and the fact that he did not get very long to enjoy that retirement is really the greatest tragedy of them all. We know from the President's comments this morning that he worked very hard from a very young age and I wish he could have had the opportunity to enjoy his retirement. I know his family will be devastated at his loss and the fact that he did not get to enjoy much of his retirement before he had to deal with serious illness. He used to sing in the corridor and would always greet you in Italian. He would call every woman "bella" irrespective of how particularly "bella" or not "bella" we looked on that day! He would whistle and always have a joke to share. Sometimes we put staff in this house under pressure and sometimes staff can react accordingly. Vince never did. He was a delightful, charming gentleman and the world is a sadder place because he is no longer in it.