

labeled by I. Nichols  
9.15 MFL  
18/4/17

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Jessica Sharp

8 June 2017

Mr Timothy Nicholls MP  
Leader of the Opposition  
Shadow Minister for Arts and Major Events  
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Dear Mr Nicholls

I seek your support for all broadcasts of Parliament to be captioned, including live-captioning.

As a hearing impaired Queenslander, I feel excluded from our democracy. I cannot fully participate and follow parliamentary debates because broadcasts are not captioned.

With the reforms to Parliament.TV in 2017, this accessibility feature has not been addressed. It is not good enough to rely on a post-event transcript (the Hansard report) a day after debate. A written extract does not convey the full context and the passion of the debate. You only get this context through the visual representation.

In this digital age where access to information is being transformed and available 24/7, all Queenslanders need access to timely and accurate information. Hearing-impaired, hard of hearing and Deaf Queenslanders are being disadvantaged and this must be corrected.

Limited closed captioning is available for broadcast of our Federal Parliament. This is a start. But Queensland can do better. Our democracy is for everybody, not just for those that can hear.

As a leader of Queensland, your position is one of great influence. Hearing-impaired, hard of hearing and Deaf Queenslanders need your support to ensure Parliament is accessible to all.

I encourage you to raise this issue with the Speaker and the Clerk of Parliament to prioritise funds to make captioning of broadcasts, including live streaming, possible.

I have also written a similar letter to you in your capacity as a member of the Committee of the Legislative Assembly.

Yours sincerely

Jessica Sharp