



Speech by

Mr M. HORAN

MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA SOUTH

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Committee (Cognate Debate)

Estimates Committee E

Report No. 1

Mr HORAN (Toowoomba South—NPA) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.53 p.m.): The most amazing feature of this Estimates process has been the admission by the Health Minister that she is pleased that waiting lists will go up. In two and a quarter years under the previous coalition Government we did the amazing: we took the waiting lists in Queensland from being the worst in Australia to being the best.

There was absolutely no data, information or planning. We put in place a plan and funded it and we performed some 13,000 extra operations in two years. We took Category 1 from having 49% long waits, the worst in Australia, to less than 5%, which was the target that we set. Before we left Government, we took Category 2 from having some 44% long waits, the worst in Australia, down to 9% or 10%, and we were on track to meet our 5% target in the following month.

What have we seen from this embattled Health Minister? All we have seen her do is stand up and say, "I am pleased that waiting lists are going to go up." Already we have seen the fraud in relation to the so-called 36,000 people on the outpatients list. Many of those people are simply people with mental health problems or medical problems such as skin rashes and so forth who want to see a doctor as an outpatient. That has nothing to do with Surgery on Time.

One of the great achievements of this coalition Government in its two and a quarter years was the fact that it found \$1.2 billion to fund the unfunded capital works programs of Queensland Health. When we left Government, some 125 projects across the length and breadth of this State, from school community health centres to major hospitals, such as the RBH and the PA, were under way. Half of those projects would never have started. The member for Logan whinged and complained about the Logan Hospital. Its fourth stage was completed only because the former coalition Government found the money to make that happen. That is the only reason it is there.

One of the most disgraceful things we have witnessed since the change of Government has been the attempt by the minority Beattie Labor Government to try to stop the Robina and Noosa Hospitals. For some reason they think that the people in the two fastest growing areas of Queensland—the Sunshine Coast and the Gold Coast—do not deserve an extra hospital. They have some sort of philosophical problem with putting in place a system that is exactly the same as that at the Mater at South Brisbane, where we have the Mater Children's, the Mater Mothers and the Mater Public all operating on a system whereby the Government provides money to the Sisters of Mercy to provide free public hospital systems. The Government is opposed to this system. We will be telling everyone on the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast that the Labor Government did its best to stop that. Fortunately, it could not do so.

It is a change to see a Health Minister who is the laughing stock of Queensland Health and the people of Queensland. In the Budget Speech, \$17.9m was promised for the Cairns Base Hospital. What was in the Budget papers? Some \$4.65m! We have already seen a backflip by the Health Minister, who promised in a major speech before the election that no co-location would go ahead at RBH, PA and Prince Charles.

Mrs EDMOND: I rise to a point of order. That is totally untrue. I never, ever said that. The member knows that. He has heard speeches in which I have said that our policy supports co-location.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Dr Clark): Order! There is no point of order.

Mr HORAN: Even the \$200m list that she was forced to put forward—the so-called unfunded projects—was all rubbish. All that is mentioned is growth funds. New initiatives are not mentioned. None of those things are mentioned. Conveniently, the only thing referred to is the growth funds. The Minister is a total fraud. When we added up the list, it came to \$22m, and all of that is a load of rubbish.

What we have seen in health in Queensland since the embattled Health Minister has taken over has been an absolute disaster. What a tragedy for a system that was fixed up and professionalised so that it met its budgets, activity levels, turned the waiting lists around and gave people confidence in the system! Firstly, we saw the fiasco at Maryborough, where the Health Minister was led by the nose by the bureaucrats—a weak embattled Health Minister who cannot do anything by herself—and turned her back on all of the promises made to the people at Maryborough. We need a Health Minister in this State with a bit of strength. We need a Health Minister who can see that budgets are met and that waiting lists are fixed, not a Health Minister who will turn poor old Maryborough into a fiasco and who promised money at Cairns but did not even have the money in the budget. The real expose today was that there was no report on the 36,000 people in outpatients.

Time expired.
