



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

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GOLD COAST HOSPITAL

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—Lib) (10.26 am): I was very interested to learn that the six silent Labor MPs who represent Gold Coast electorates will meet with the health minister to discuss the crisis at the Gold Coast Hospital. That certainly begs the question: what have they been doing for the past 4½ years? What were they doing when the hospital was on bypass and patients were being diverted to Brisbane or interstate, or at times told to keep driving? Where were these members when ambulances were turned into mobile wards on the driveway at the Gold Coast Hospital? Where were these members when mental health patients were turned away from Gold Coast Hospital and given cab vouchers or simply released prematurely, resulting in incidents that have threatened the lives of the mentally ill, their families and other members of the community? Why is this a meeting—a meeting on a subject that, to use the words of the member for Mudgeeraba, has frustrated us all—to which only Labor MPs are invited? Why is it that those who are least active on the subject are the ones who get to talk to the minister about these problems? Is it that the government is going to continue to play politics with this issue rather than fix the problems at the Gold Coast Hospital?

I encourage the new health minister to be open to bipartisan support for fixing the problems at the Gold Coast Hospital. I am eager to help, as are the members for Robina and Currumbin. For too long on the Gold Coast there have been problems with our hospital. They affect people up and down the coast. This is a chance for the health minister to show that he is not going to get sucked into petty politics and play games with people's lives. Let us see him do the things that are required to fix this mess and, while he is about it, reassure the people of the Gold Coast that the existing hospital will not be removed. Let us see this government get its priorities right. Let us not have the same federal blame game that the government plays in relation to IR and Telstra. Let us fix the health system.