



Speech by

## Robert Messenger

MEMBER FOR BURNETT

Hansard Thursday, 10 August 2006

---

### QUEENSLAND HEALTH; PLANT HARVESTING

**Mr MESSENGER** (Burnett—NPA) (6.43 pm): With the revelation this morning that Queensland Health has failed the people of Mackay, I am experiencing a sense of déjà vu. I have some simple advice for the victims of Labor's Queensland Health in Mackay: do not trust what the government and the health bureaucrats are telling you to be the truth, especially what this minister and this Premier say. I have to agree with Ms Crosby when she said publicly today that people should speak out, but I disagree with her statement that Queensland should have a pretty good liaison by now. It is abysmal. The lessons we have learnt in Bundaberg are that, if this government can cover up the damage it has caused, it will.

I say this to affected people. Keep a diary of what has happened. Demand to have everything in writing and, if they will not give you the information, record, within the bounds of the law, conversations you have with bureaucrats. Get some good legal advice and, if you are not happy with it, get a second legal opinion, get a third legal opinion, get a fourth legal opinion. Demand copies of your medical records as soon as possible and make sure that they have not been fraudulently altered, as they were in Bundaberg. If you need to get a medico legal opinion, demand to see the doctor of your choice. If you need corrective surgery, demand to see the doctor of your choice. If you need to speak with a Patel victim, I can supply lists of people who would love to talk with you.

This government, through the department of environment, has changed by regulation the commercial wildlife harvesting act. This change has destroyed the business of a constituent of mine in Agnes Water, Mr Keith Nash. He has written a letter to me detailing his frustration and I table the letter.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, undated, from Mr Keith Nash, Director, Eldanham Pty Ltd to Mr Messenger regarding wildlife harvesting legislation changes.

Mr Nash has had to sack eight employees because of this government's action. Mr Nash's business was to salvage and harvest cycads and grass trees on land that was zoned white. That means that it was zoned legally and able to be cleared by primary producers. Mr Nash's letter said—

I received a letter from EPA on 11 April (after closure of licence) to find we are no longer allowed to salvage plants which have been approved by EPA and which otherwise will be destroyed. We have had no notification or information from EPA or any other Government Department till after cancellation of licences. Our local EPA officer said he received a final print out of these new regulations in late April—well after our licence period ended.

We have been harvesting Grass Trees under salvage for in excess of 16 years.

Mr Nash is a hardworking local business person in Agnes Water. He employed eight people.

Time expired.