



Speech by

# Hon. Judy Spence

**MEMBER FOR SUNNYBANK**

Hansard Wednesday, 2 September 2009

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## **CRIMINAL CODE (MEDICAL TREATMENT) AMENDMENT BILL: DECLARED URGENT**

**Hon. JC SPENCE** (Sunnybank—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.19 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That under the provisions of standing order 159, the Criminal Code (Medical Treatment) Amendment Bill be declared an urgent bill to enable the bill to be passed through its remaining stages at this week's sitting.

Normally the government would not want to bring on emergency bills such as this. We appreciate that members would prefer to have two weeks to study the bill and to talk to people about legislation that is being proposed and is before the House. However, any member of this chamber who has watched the media in the past couple of weeks and listened to the concerns of doctors would understand the reasons for the urgency of this legislation.

Last night in his second reading speech the Attorney-General outlined very clearly that we need to give certainty to our doctors. Medical practitioners at some public hospitals in Queensland have raised doubts over the current position at law of medical procedures. As a result, doctors are concerned about possible criminal prosecution for administering nonsurgical treatments whereas suboptimal and riskier surgical procedures would be protected. As a result, some procedures have been cancelled or suspended until the law is changed. It is critical to give doctors and their patients some certainty about these matters. That is why the government believes it is urgent that we debate this bill today.