




Speech by

Dr Chris Davis

MEMBER FOR STAFFORD

Hansard Thursday, 21 June 2012

QUEENSLAND CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

 **Dr DAVIS** (Stafford—LNP) (3.07 pm): I rise to address an article in today's *Courier-Mail*, which states—

Health minister Lawrence Springborg has condemned the spending of \$150,000 of public money to produce a glossy propaganda video to counter criticism of the new Queensland Children's Hospital.

Honourable members and taxpayers should be asking why something that is costing at least \$1.5 billion needs propaganda. Surely the logic underpinning such a massive outlay only requires the best and cheapest form of advertising, which is word of mouth. Sadly, word of mouth from those in the know is that this project is yet another example of deceitful and fatally flawed decision making by the Beattie-Bligh governments. It is so fatally flawed that, of the Queensland Health capital works currently underway, the recent Costello Queensland Commission of Audit chose to highlight the Queensland Children's Hospital for its flaws. The Commission of Audit states—

The initial cost of the hospital was estimated at \$690 million. Since then costs have more than doubled, to a revised figure of \$1.5 billion

...

This raises questions as to the adequacy of the preliminary evaluation, initial cost estimates, cost control and project management (including scope provisions), and therefore overall value for money in the delivery of the project.

While we must worry about the financial incompetence that the Costello report has uncovered, we must be even more worried about the associated overall planning incompetence because it is that that carries grave risks for the future of our children's health. Wikipedia states—

Propaganda often presents facts selectively (thus possibly lying by omission) to encourage a particular synthesis, or uses loaded messages to produce an emotional rather than rational response to the information presented.

It is precisely because Queensland Health is needing to use propaganda to sell the Queensland Children's Hospital that bald claims that the Queensland Children's Hospital will deliver world-class children's health services must ring alarm bells.

Just as we have not run or hidden from the financial position Labor has left Queensland in, so too we must find the courage to properly examine all the assumptions

and conduct that have given birth to the illegitimate Queensland Children's Hospital and its offspring. When it comes to rising to the challenge of ensuring the future of health services for the children of Queensland, I cannot do better than commend to this House the words of Dr Martin Luther King, who stated—

The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.