



Speech by


## Hon. Rachel Nolan

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

Hansard Tuesday, 14 February 2012

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### MOTION: PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE REBATE

 **Hon. RG NOLAN** (Ipswich—ALP) (Minister for Finance, Natural Resources and the Arts) (6.21 pm): The member for Clayfield has tonight sought to personalise this debate. He has sought patently to personalise this debate around the voting record of the member for Ashgrove. That is exactly what he did. What is the response to that? We know about the leadership record of the LNP candidate for Ashgrove. What is that record when it comes to the cost of living? That record is to go to the election promising to resign if rates went up beyond CPI and then, over the course of his leadership, to put up rates by a full 43 per cent. Why would the member for Clayfield do that? There are two possibilities. The first is that his point was entirely rhetorical and he hoped that nobody would pull him up on it and the second is that he is happy for the LNP candidate's record as Lord Mayor to be heard. Because the member for Clayfield is the one member of the leadership team on the LNP side thus far who has not ruled out the possibility of running for the leadership in the quite possible event that the LNP win the election but Campbell Newman does not win his seat. That is a real possibility. The member for Clayfield has refused to rule out that possibility.

Often times politics is about priorities. In moving this motion tonight the LNP show us their true priorities for all of us to see. Just once a week the LNP gets the opportunity to move a motion and to have the whole House debate it. This week in parliamentary terms is perhaps more significant than ever before because this is the last sitting week before an upcoming state election. On this incredibly pertinent point, at this critical time, what has the LNP done? Have those opposite chosen to move a motion about a state issue that they think is important? Have they chosen to come in here and talk about economic management? Have they chosen to come in here and talk about health, education, public transport? They have not. They have come in here and they have moved a motion about an issue which is entirely within the realm of the federal government. What is that issue? As we know, the federal government has sought to remove a private health rebate, a matter of debate in the federal parliament, for people with household incomes of more than \$258,000 a year. That is 2.8 per cent of Queensland households. Protecting that is, in this critical debate, the LNP's absolutely highest priority. I believe that that utterly says it all.

This is the party that opposed Medicare when it happened and that opposed the establishment of Medibank Private. The Liberals and the Nationals are the parties that sat in here silent while the previous federal government ripped nearly half a billion dollars out of public dental services. But it is important enough to protect a subsidy for 2.8 per cent of households that they choose it as their No. 1 priority for debate for the week. Frankly, I believe that when it comes to their priorities that says it all.

Labor has delivered in terms of health. We have delivered significant hospital upgrades right across the state: a new hospital in Mackay, significant changes in Cairns, major improvements in cancer services and we are delivering a major upgrade to the Ipswich Hospital. But those opposite have been silent while funds have been pulled out of public health and make the maintenance of a subsidy for the few their highest priority here.