




Speech By
Rob Molhoek

MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

Record of Proceedings, 29 October 2013

HEALTH LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (10.41 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 and the constructive changes that this bill proposes in accordance with the Newman government's policy objectives. This bill takes a common-sense approach to a number of pieces of legislation, enhancing operational effectiveness and reducing the regulatory burden in line with the government's legislative priorities.

Anyone involved with the provision of health services on the Gold Coast or residents who have visited a Gold Coast hospital during the past 12 months would have noticed the vast improvements since decision-making power was returned to local health boards in June last year. The Gold Coast Hospital and Health Board, ably led by chairman Ian Langdon, has consistently delivered improved services and managed the successful move from the Gold Coast Hospital to the new Gold Coast University Hospital at Parklands. Tomorrow morning I will welcome the Premier and the Minister for Health, along with some of my parliamentary colleagues, to my electorate for the official opening of the new hospital, which has been operating now for just over four weeks. Mr Langdon and chief executive Ron Calvert have led a seamless transition into the hospital, continuing to provide first-class health services for the constituents of my electorate and all the other electorates across the city.

After the formalities at the new hospital tomorrow morning the Premier will then turn the sod for the new Allamanda Private Hospital next door, which will be part of the growing health and knowledge precinct in Southport. Just across the road at Griffith University Vice-Chancellor Professor Ian O'Connor and Pro-Vice-Chancellor Professor Allan Cripps have just opened their \$150 million health centre, which is the largest investment in a single building in Griffith University's 40-year history.

There has never been a better time to be involved in the provision of health services on the Gold Coast and in Southport. The changes introduced by the minister and carried out by the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service have been instrumental in ensuring that Gold Coasters can access the best possible health care and health professionals. Last month, Mr Langdon wrote to me with the results of the 2013 in-patient satisfaction survey conducted across both the Gold Coast Hospital and the Robina Hospital. Ninety-two per cent of respondents reported that their care at the Gold Coast Hospital was good to excellent, with the same number stating that they would recommend the Gold Coast Hospital to others. These are fantastic results and are a credit to the dedicated staff at these two hospitals.

This bill will hand over even more control to the local health boards by ensuring that they are able to assume responsibility for the land and buildings under their control. This is consistent with the Blueprint for Better Healthcare in Queensland, which proposed that local communities should be allowed to tailor the service delivery of any current and future infrastructure development assets and capital works projects.

I am strongly supportive of the minister's statement in his explanatory speech that—

These amendments are consistent with the government's intention that the decentralisation of health care will be strengthened by giving hospital and health boards greater control over key aspects of decision making.

We are committed to taking the bureaucracy out of health services and making sure that local communities have control over the decisions that are made about health services in their area.

I would also like to highlight the bill's proposed amendments to the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979 to free the implementation of this important legislation from red tape. Three hundred and forty thousand Queenslanders are listed on the organ donor register, part of six million people nationwide. Although that may seem a large number, the reality is that, although 80 per cent of Australians indicate that they are willing to become organ donors, less than 60 per cent of families give consent for an organ or tissue donation to proceed. The organ donation debate was thrown back into the spotlight today when it was revealed that the family of six-year-old Mia Quinnell, who was tragically killed in a freak accident on the weekend west of Toowoomba, made the unthinkable brave decision to donate her organs. Decisions such as that, although heartbreaking, mean that countless other lives are saved and more families are spared the harrowing task of burying their loved ones. This process should operate as effectively and as efficiently as possible to save unnecessary drama and stress at such a delicate time. The amendments proposed in this bill will modify the definition of 'senior available next of kin' and clarify requirements about a person's view of an organ donation. These are important and sensible changes. I stand in the House tonight to speak in favour of this bill. I am very supportive of this amendment bill as proposed by the minister.