




Speech By
Ros Bates

MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA

APPROPRIATION BILLS: HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (10.38 pm): I rise to speak on the report on the Health and Community Services Committee's consideration of the 2013-14 budget estimates. I thank the Minister for Health for addressing the committee. The minister has significant challenges in the wake of the federal Labor government's budget cuts to health and I applaud his achievements at a time when Labor has seen fit to pull the rug out from under all Queenslanders who expect their federal government to support their health and hospital requirements. I thank the minister for his support for the Robina Hospital, a hospital that has been the subject of ridiculous innuendos from the Queensland Nurses Union. The QNU has been spreading mistruths about the future of the hospital, creating unwarranted concern for the staff and local community.

This of course is the same QNU that failed to stand up for its members in the wake of the payroll debacle. These are important issues. It was extremely disappointing that the member for Bundamba's behaviour did not reflect the importance of the issues discussed. The honourable member spent much of the initial hearing interrupting the director-general when he was trying to outline the budgetary challenges that the department has faced in planning for the 2013-14 budgetary year, and no wonder. In a favour to her federal Labor mates she was trying to prevent the director-general from outlining the funding ripped from Health in Queensland by the Labor government as they face an election where their legacy will be under substantial and justified scrutiny.

When looking at the most recent midyear economic and fiscal outlook, it is clear that Queensland's funding from the federal government is approximately \$485 million worse off under Labor over the forward estimates. Meanwhile, the most recent Queensland budget delivered a total of \$12.326 billion for Health, which was a \$1.28 billion increase over and above the level of expenditure under the former Labor government. In the face of this lack of support from Canberra, the minister has delivered substantial improvements: the best financial performance Queensland Health has ever had; the best emergency department performance it has ever had; and the lowest state-wide in-hospital mortality rate the system has ever had.

Our compromised border between mainland Australia and Papua New Guinea sees the state out of pocket in terms of the costs of providing health services to PNG nationals with compensation from the Commonwealth for its failure to secure our borders falling significantly short. We continue to bear the brunt of the cost of the Labor government's inability to do what is surely one of its most vital functions—that is, maintaining the integrity of our borders. The most recent figures are yet to be released. I encourage the Commonwealth to step up and ensure the state is adequately compensated.

I would also like to thank the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services whom I look forward to hosting and introducing to some of the great community service organisations in the Mudgeeraba electorate on her upcoming visit to the Gold Coast. The member for Bundamba once again embarrassed herself by attempting to elicit private and confidential information from the

minister during estimates, with the minister of course maintaining the privacy of the family in question. Not only was it improper, but an attempt to use the private information of one family for political gain is just tacky and distasteful.

I also thank the Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing for his continued support for the Springbrook community. The initiatives that he has been introducing during his tenure demonstrate an understanding of communities like Springbrook and its needs—an attribute sorely lacking in his predecessor 'Carbon Kate'. His predecessor sought to gut the Springbrook community of its economy and in a quest to deliver preferences from the Greens to the ALP delivered a strategy that if it had continued would have resulted in the decimation of an historic and vibrant community. Thankfully, though, the Springbrook community is strong, is resilient and is committed to the mountain's future. I thank them for toughing it out when their survival was truly at risk.

I know that the Springbrook community want more support from their government. I know that it is coming. I have strong confidence in the minister's ability and his desire to deliver that support. We will address the initiatives of the previous government which sought to shut down the Springbrook community. I thank the minister for his support for Mudgeeraba's local sport clubs and sportspeople through the Get in the Game initiative. These groups truly help to maintain the sense of community that is so distinctive within my electorate.

I thank the ministers who addressed the committee for their commitment to openness and their passion for their areas of responsibility. It is clear that we as a government are committed to tackling the policy challenges ahead and to restoring financial responsibility to the government in Queensland.