




Speech By
Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE

Record of Proceedings, 14 July 2015

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Member for Southern Downs, Elective Surgery Wait-Time Guarantee

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (10.14 am): It has been 42 days since I asked the Leader of the Opposition to provide the cabinet documents to support his claims made in this House about his wait-time gimmick. In this chamber in a debate on elective surgery waiting lists the Leader of the Opposition made a number of claims. He made claims about the number of people waiting longer than clinically recommended for surgery at the change of government—claims that were false—and in the same debate he stated—

This program was a \$500 million program and it was properly costed; the money was there.

This is a very clear, very direct statement made in front of you, Mr Speaker, and made in front of all of the members of this House and through those members to the people of Queensland. The *Cabinet Handbook* makes it very clear that if you are going to spend half a billion dollars of public money—that if you are going to spend \$500 million—it must be authorised by the executive. That is why on 2 June I wrote to the Leader of the Opposition asking him to release the cabinet documents and the Cabinet Budget Review Committee documents authorising the expenditure of \$500 million on his wait-time guarantee. Sadly, the member for Southern Downs—the longest serving member of this parliament—does not think it appropriate to write back to another member of this House. I did get a letter. I got a letter from a Mr Jake Smith who, on my recollection, was never elected to any public office in this House and did not make the comments in this House. He made no comments; it was the Leader of the Opposition.

In this letter from Mr Smith I was asked to support my position, and I have consistently placed on the public record that the cost of the Leader of the Opposition's gimmick was \$77 million. I am pleased to table the spreadsheet provided to my office by the Department of Health which illustrates the cost of the wait-time gimmick and what that money was to be spent on.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Wait Time Program—High level work breakdown structure (over 3 years)' [728].

This is not good enough from the longest serving member of this parliament who has been in this House for almost 26 years. He cannot come into this place and say, 'There was \$500 million for this program. The money was there. It was fully costed.' This is not a difficult proposition. The Leader of the Opposition knows the mechanism to release cabinet documents. Why? Because when he was the minister for health he lectured to the then opposition at length about the release of cabinet documents. He knows about the process. If he wants to be an alternative Premier, he needs to be truthful in this parliament and truthful to the people of Queensland. So I call upon him again to come clean and to release the cabinet documents—

Mr Nicholls: A bit like you were with the SPER fines!

Mr DICK: Well, the member for Clayfield yells out. Perhaps he can assist him. He would have been the Treasurer that authorised the \$500 million expenditure. He should authorise the release of the documents and assist the Leader of the Opposition.