




Speech By
Craig Crawford

MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER

Record of Proceedings, 19 May 2015

MOTION: ELECTIVE SURGERY WAIT-TIME GUARANTEE

 **Mr CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (6.14 pm): I rise to speak against the motion moved by the member for Caloundra. As I have travelled through my electorate and spoken to people throughout the campaign, it was very clear that there were a number of problems with the now discredited wait-time gimmick being peddled by the member for Southern Downs.

During the campaign, Labor made it clear that we would not provide support for this until we had the opportunity to look at the real figures. Now we have had that chance. We have been advised in this House by the Minister for Health that the Department of Health has consistently advised the government that the wait-time program pursued by the LNP suffered from a number of significant policy flaws.

First, it failed to take into account the entire patient journey, relegating over 100,000 Queenslanders to waiting longer than clinically recommended for specialist outpatient appointments. Shame on you, LNP, for leaving so many Queenslanders out.

Second, the exemptions provided under the discredited LNP wait-time program made the program effectively meaningless for many Queenslanders.

Mr Costigan interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! One moment, please. Member for Whitsunday, if you want to speak, you can join the speaking list. I know that the Leader of the Opposition will be speaking shortly. I call the minister. Sorry, I call the member.

Mr CRAWFORD: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am not a minister yet.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members of the opposition! I call the member.

Mr CRAWFORD: Third, the program provided \$77 million over three years for advertising and bureaucracy but did not provide any funding for the provision of additional services in any Queensland hospital in a situation where there is significant pressure on health expenditure. Out of the \$77 million to be spent on the program, \$15 million over three years was allocated to advertising alone.

Today's *Courier-Mail* article refers to statements that were written by a contractor with a project management background, not a health background. This was a contractor, employed under the LNP, being paid between \$1,500 and \$2,500 a day to do up pretty PowerPoint presentations for the member for Southern Downs to tell him how good the wait-time program was at taxpayers' expense, with taxpayers footing this exorbitant bill. No wonder they supported it. For \$2,500 a day, you might be able to convince me to support it!

The member for Southern Downs surrounded himself with yes-men and yes-women who agreed with everything he said. There was no room for proper policy debate—just gimmicks and advertisements, and now we have a stunt to save a gimmick.