




Speech By
Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

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**PUBLIC HEALTH (CHILD CARE VACCINATION) AND OTHER LEGISLATION
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Ms GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (5.20 pm): I rise to support the Public Health (Childcare Vaccination) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. What could be more important than saving the lives of young babies and children? I think all in this House agree that that is probably one of the most important things that we can do as parliamentarians and hence we have a unified position in relation to this legislation. I join the member for Logan who spoke before me in congratulating the committee and the chair and those who worked on this bill to ensure that we do what we can to push it along a little bit so that we do have parents vaccinating their children.

Access to vaccines for preventable infectious diseases is probably one of the most important elements of a universal healthcare system when one considers that vaccination, according to World Health Organization estimates, prevents between two million and three million deaths each year. That is staggering. One has to consider how sick a child who caught one of these preventable diseases when they were young would have been, particularly those who caught polio. Recently I was at a Polio Australia fundraiser held at the Brunswick Hotel in New Farm. Many elderly people who unfortunately contracted polio before the immunisation for that particular preventable disease had become available are still suffering to this day. I note that we do have some pretty good immunisation rates. I think in 2015 the immunisation rate for one-year-olds was around 93 per cent; for two-year-olds about 91 per cent; and for five-year-olds about 92 per cent. But the target is 95 per cent. We think that that is probably the minimum target required to achieve what the member for Ipswich West spoke about and that is herd immunity for diseases such as measles. In order to get to that level we are going to have to give our organisations such as childcare centres the ability to ensure that parents get these immunisations up to date and to make sure that their staff and other children in those centres are protected from these preventable disease. I know that my daughter Alexandra is up to date with all her immunisations. I commend the bill to the House.