




Speech By
Joseph Kelly

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

Record of Proceedings, 15 September 2015

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL

Health and Ambulance Services Committee, Report

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (9.39 pm): I rise to speak in support of the report that has been tabled on the estimates hearing of the Health and Ambulance Services Committee. I was impressed at how quickly the member for Woodridge has got on top of his brief. Maintaining a state of good health and delivering care to those who are sick or injured is an incredibly complex task, but the minister demonstrated that he has a deep understanding of all of the activities of his department.

Health is best maintained by preventing illness—a simple and seemingly obvious statement, but the previous government did not seem to understand that.

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Grace): Order! Member for Lockyer, you are not in your seat and you are interjecting. Member for Chatsworth, this banter across the chamber on irrelevant issues while someone is on their feet is disrespectful. I ask that you respect the House. The member for Greenslopes has the call.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Chatsworth.

Mr Dick interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Minister, please. I am speaking. The member for Greenslopes has the call. Any more of that and I will start to warn.

Mr KELLY: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker, particularly when someone is on their feet saying something relevant. Health is best maintained by preventing illness—a simple and seemingly obvious statement, but the previous government did not seem to understand that. However, the SDS outlined no less than 10 initiatives to restore preventative health services in this state: the health for life program, the 10,000 steps program, kilojoule labelling, the Go for 2 & 5 program and empowering councils to further discourage smoking—

Mr Dick interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Minister, please. The member for Greenslopes has the call. I ask you to cease this interjection and banter across the chamber.

Mr KELLY: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. These are the sorts of programs that we need to prevent people from developing diabetes and many other common health programs. These programs

will save significant money in the future but much more importantly will help people to lead full, healthy and long lives.

As we discovered in our recent health coaching review, the sorts of things that will prevent diabetes—more exercise, more fresh fruit and vegies, limiting alcohol and soft drink intake, stopping smoking and dealing with stress—will also prevent stroke, heart disease, macular degeneration and, as the federal Mental Health Commissioner suggested at a recent talk I attended, will also play a role in promoting mental health. I was amazed in this review how many government, non-government, academic and private businesses are involved in health promotion and how much activity there is in this area. Of course all of this activity will only be more effective if it is being coordinated and planned. That is why it is good that this budget provides \$7.5 million over the forward estimates to establish a statewide Health Promotion Commissioner.

Like many Queenslanders, I was shocked at the decision by the former government to close the Barrett centre for adolescent mental health—a decision taken against the advice of experts, the outcry of the community and the pleas from the patients and their families. I am pleased that this budget not only moves to reintroduce this service but allocates funding for the expansion of this service in North Queensland.

The allocation of funding—\$361.2 million over the forward estimates—to tackle the significant number of people waiting longer than clinically recommended to see a specialist will be welcomed by the people in the electorate of Greenslopes. As a registered nurse, I absolutely applaud this budget. Ratios will save lives and the allocation of funding for this initiative is world leading and is something that nurses have been calling on governments to do for decades. The 1,000 new graduate positions, 400 nurse navigator positions and re-establishing primary school age nurse services in vulnerable communities like Logan are all initiatives that nurses will welcome.

Safety and quality units have achieved some amazing things in recent years. They regularly change behaviours, attitudes, policy and processes that result in real benefits for patients. The management of deteriorating patients and clinical handover are just two areas that I could highlight that have saved countless lives. Sadly, the previous government decimated safety and quality units around the state, and I am proud that this budget allocates money to re-establishing these services.

The biggest threat to our health system is the threat posed by a federal Liberal National Party government that does not believe in a universal public health system. We know they do not believe in it because they think that it is okay to rip \$11.8 billion out of the system from July 2017. We have had a change of captain but will he steer the ship in another direction? I very much doubt it. This is a frightening reality and one that I hope the Australian people deal with appropriately at the next federal election.

I commend the health and ambulance services minister and his staff, and all of the staff from the Department of Health, the Queensland Ambulance Service, the health and hospital services, the Queensland Institute of Medical Research, the Mental Health Commission and the Health Ombudsman. I thank them for their tireless work and for being prepared for the scrutiny that we applied through the estimates hearing. There is so much in this health budget that I could cover. I have deliberately left the discussion of ambulance services to my colleague the member for Thuringowa.

I wish to thank the chair of our committee, other committee members and our secretariat staff. My final praise is for the minister who, together with the Premier and the Treasurer, has demonstrated that Labor is committed to promoting, maintaining and restoring health for the people of Queensland. I commend the report to the House.