




Speech By
Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE

Record of Proceedings, 3 November 2016

MOTION: PALASZCZUK LABOR GOVERNMENT, PERFORMANCE

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (6.15 pm): This evening I am delighted to rise to oppose this motion. If the LNP wants to talk about failure, let us talk about success for a little while and the success of the Palaszczuk Labor government. The LNP wants to whinge; the Labor Party works. It whinges; we work. What an extraordinary 18 months of achievement it has been in the Health portfolio. When we were elected we promised to rebuild health services after they were thrashed and trashed—decimated by the LNP Newman-Nicholls government—and we are getting on with the job.

What is the legacy so far? In this year's budget a record \$15.274 billion was allocated to Health, an increase of 7.7 per cent. We have employed an additional 3,179 nurses and 903 doctors. Through our \$361 million specialist outpatient strategy we have reduced the number of people waiting longer than clinically recommended for a specialist outpatient appointment by over 40 per cent. We have introduced safe nurse to patient ratios. Through our \$212 million nursing guarantee and Refresh Nursing initiatives, we have recruited our first round of nurse navigators and seen 2,000 nurse graduates offered a position. We have employed an additional 115 ambulance officers and commissioned an additional 155 ambulances. We are investing \$200 million to close the gap in life expectancy and infant mortality rates between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Queenslanders. We have done all of this while delivering a surplus of \$51 million across the Queensland health system. What a contrast.

If there is one song that would characterise the Leader of the Opposition, it would be *The First Cut is the Deepest*. Who will ever forget his stunning contribution to public policy when he delivered his first budget as Campbell Newman's treasurer? Who will ever forget the pompous swagger as he came into the chamber, loaded his record majority into his fiscal cannon and flattened the Queensland economy? Who will forget the protest rallies outside—the thousands of people who gathered outside to protest against him? Who will ever forget how Campbell Newman and the LNP dishonestly misled public servants in this state—betrayed nurses, fought the judiciary and started a war with doctors? Who will ever forget the cuts? So impressed were Tony Abbott and Joe Hockey with the member for Clayfield's brand of howitzer economics they used it as a blueprint for their own first budget—widely regarded as the worst federal budget in history, policies that continue to be pursued by Malcolm Turnbull. However, I do not want to mislead the parliament. I do not want to say that the only thing that the Leader of the Opposition did was cut. Of course he increased things, and we need to recognise that. He increased unemployment, he increased government debt and of course his masterpiece—he increased the threshold for declaring political donations by an impressive 1,200 per cent. He kept the donors of the LNP happy, didn't he? Now he is back: Dr Nicholls's travelling circus is bringing the snake oil back to Queensland! That is what he is doing—fulfilling his life mission to sell Queensland assets and right size the Public Service. That is his mission.

We saw through the member for Clayfield. The people of Queensland saw through the member for Clayfield. They see through him again as the Leader of the Opposition. It is not difficult to see why he has been described as the invisible man. He was happy to go to lunch last week, but he is happy to disappear from the public landscape. He would be on the missing persons list if he did not turn up to parliament this week. The reality is, being lectured on economic management and government delivery by the member for Clayfield is like being lectured on personal responsibility by Clive Palmer or on women's rights by Donald Trump.

Instead of moving a motion about a litany of failures, the Leader of the Opposition should be focusing on his own legacy of horror—something that the people of Queensland will not forget. He should do the right thing and apologise to Queensland for what he did, which was wrong. He should have the courage and integrity to apologise to the people of Queensland for the disaster he rained down on the people of Queensland across a whole range of areas.