




Speech By
Hon. Curtis Pitt

MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE

Record of Proceedings, 25 February 2016

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

National Injury Insurance Scheme

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (9.44 am): Our system of compulsory third-party insurance for registered motor vehicles has served us well for many decades. Many of us rarely even think about it, but it is a system that has a gap in cover. CTP is a fault based insurance scheme designed to cover those who are not at fault for a crash should they have the misfortune of being injured in one. Because it is fault based, there is no cover for injured people considered to be at fault in a crash or for situations where there is nobody at fault.

In 2013 the former LNP government, along with all states and territories except Western Australia, agreed to introduce the National Injury Insurance Scheme, NIIS. Part of that was to make sure anyone catastrophically injured in a car accident gets the care and support they need throughout their lifetime. Queensland's Motor Accident Insurance Commission advises me that each week three people sustain catastrophic injuries in road crashes in our state: spinal or brain injuries—principally paraplegia or quadriplegia—loss of limbs, severe burns or blindness.

These are tragedies that have terrible impacts on Queensland families. It could happen to any of us. What many Queenslanders may not realise is that about half of all those injured are not eligible to claim against CTP insurance. To put it simply, when you get behind the wheel you are not half as protected as you may think.

After finally signing Queensland up to the NIIS, the former LNP government could not get it moving during their time in office. The Palaszczuk government has acted. Last November the Minister for Disability Services and I joined the disability sector in confirming that Queensland would be proceeding with the National Injury Insurance Scheme from 1 July 2016. Because of the history of this new scheme, being signed up to by the Newman government in 2013, I would like and expect bipartisan support from the LNP. We will wait to see if that happens or if they take the opportunity to use it for pointsoring.

We are committed to consulting with the community prior to introducing this new scheme. That is why today I will be joining with inspirational Queensland Paralympian Marayke Jonkers in launching a public awareness campaign to help people better understand why it is important for all Queenslanders to get the care and support they need when catastrophically injured in a car accident. Marayke herself was injured in such an accident when she was just a baby. She has a powerful story to tell and will be the public face of our awareness campaign.

As honourable members would be aware, a parliamentary committee has been examining the NIIS and considering public submissions. I thank them for their work to date, particularly the members for Pine Rivers and Sunnybank. The committee has received feedback from across the community

including from community service providers, insurance bodies, medical and legal professionals as well as individuals. The committee will report next month with suggestions on how to implement the scheme in the most efficient, effective and affordable way.

Catastrophic injury can happen to any of us at any time. Implementing the NIIS and ensuring that every Queenslanders is covered is the right thing to do for those injured and their families. I urge all Queenslanders to find out more by visiting www.qld.gov.au/niis.