




Speech By
Jarrold Bleijie

MEMBER FOR KAWANA

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Black Lung Disease

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (2.45 pm): Tragically, overnight we heard about another diagnosis of black lung disease in Queensland caused by the breathing in of coal dust at the Goonyella Riverside open-cut mine near Moranbah. Mr Paul Head is the 16th diagnosis of black lung disease since May this year and the first diagnosis of a miner from an open-cut mine. Why is this significant? It is because at May this year 41 of the 54 operating coalmines in Queensland were open-cut mines. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Mr Head and his family as they come to terms with the diagnosis and the various treatment options available.

We should also think of the thousands of Queenslanders who have worked or currently work in the coalmining industry and the level of stress and concern that they and their family will be going through now. No-one deserves to contract an illness or disease due to going to or from work when they are earning an honest living to support themselves and their family. That is why every effort must be taken to find out what has gone wrong, why black lung has re-emerged in Queensland and what can be done to ensure it is banished forever.

Today the LNP renews its calls for a full royal commission of inquiry into the re-emergence of black lung disease. We think it is the appropriate course of action for it to be held in the state. We hear time and time again from the CFMEU, the member for Mirani and the member for Bundamba that there should have been a royal commission into the re-emergence of black lung and yet when given the chance, when given the opportunity to support a royal commission into black lung disease, they squibbed it. Not only that, we now have a parliamentary inquiry looking at the issue and the member for Mirani is not even serving on it and he has been one of the most vocal Labor proponents of royal commissions along with the member for Bundamba.

When we see the story today of Mr Head, when we see stories with titles such as 'Union calls for black lung royal commission' and 'Miller and Pearce turn their backs on miners', we see a history of hypocrisy. The member for Mirani also talks a lot about fly-in fly-out. He held a parliamentary inquiry into fly-in fly-out, despite fly-in fly-out contracts being brought to this parliament by Anna Bligh. Anna Bligh's government put those contracts in place which the member now opposes. The member for Bundamba basically said, 'I will stake my political career on having a royal commission into black lung.' Of course, we do not have a royal commission into black lung.

It would be unbelievable for members of this government to see that Jarrod Bleijie and the CFMEU are at one on an issue, and we are; we are calling, just as the CFMEU has, for a royal commission. The member for Mirani has let down his community and all those coalminers. How can a coalminer's daughter in the member for Bundamba vote against a royal commission into black lung disease? The LNP is the only party committed to finding out why black lung disease has re-emerged and getting to the bottom of it once and for all. I call on those members to finally support a royal commission.

(Time expired)