




Speech By  
**Mark Ryan**

**MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD**

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**HEALTH LEGISLATION (WAITING LIST INTEGRITY) AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (9.06 pm): I rise to oppose the Health Legislation (Waiting List Integrity) Amendment Bill 2015.

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr RYAN:** The member for Mudgeeraba should wait, because I am about to commend her for supporting the health committee as deputy chair. Before the member for Mudgeeraba interjects she should wait for the compliment, because it is probably the only compliment she will get for a little while. I compliment the deputy chair of the committee, the member for Mudgeeraba; the chair of the committee, the member for Nudgee; and all of the other committee members who served on that health committee for bringing the report to the parliament and providing their views about this particular piece of legislation.

I must say, Mr Deputy Speaker, that I thought the name of the bill was a punchline to a joke, because, when we are talking about waiting list integrity, there is no integrity whatsoever from the LNP when it comes to waiting lists. There is no integrity from the LNP when it comes to health policy. There is no integrity from the LNP when it comes to looking after healthcare professionals in our public health system in Queensland. We know their record when it comes to health in Queensland. We have seen it over the last three years when they were in government. Every single time I was out campaigning before the 2015 election, someone came up to me and told me their horror LNP health story. It is true. They deny it, but it is true. It is true when we talk about the LNP horror, so perhaps it is not a punchline to a joke. This bill is reflective of the horror movie that is the LNP in government when they were dealing with public health in Queensland. Every time I was out campaigning before the 2015 election I would hear the horror stories. I would be knocking on doors and there would be sacked nurses—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Furner): Order! Member for Morayfield, take your seat. Member for Burnett, I am going to warn you under standing order 253. You are on the list. The member for Morayfield has the call.

**Mr RYAN:** The more they shout, the more they try to hide the truth. I refer to those sacked nurses—those people the LNP said did not exist. They said that they did not sack any nurses. Well, I met many of them. I met sacked nurses from Caboolture Hospital—very hardworking people sacked by those opposite. Those opposite undermined the good work being done at Caboolture Hospital—a great public hospital in Queensland—by sacking nurses from that hospital. Caboolture Hospital is one of the busiest hospitals in Queensland—one of the busiest maternity hospitals and one of the busiest emergency departments. How did those opposite support it? When they were in government they sacked nurses. Shame on them. The horror movie that is the LNP health policy continues when they are in government.

It went beyond that. There is another group of people they said never existed—that is, people on the waiting list. There were TV ads about the wait-time guarantee in which they said, 'There's no-one on the waiting list.' When I was out campaigning before the 2015 election I met many people who were offended by those ads—people who were waiting to be seen because they had breast cancer. I knocked on the door of a lady in Narangba who told me that she had been waiting three months for an appointment for breast cancer treatment. She was offended by those ads because the LNP said that she did not exist. Those ads said that she was not waiting for an appointment. I met an older lady from Burpengary who, by the time the 2015 election came around, had been waiting three years for a knee operation. They said that she did not exist. Just recently people have come to my office and have said that they have been waiting for years as well.

I am very pleased to say that, because of the investment this government is putting in to our health system, under the wonderful leadership of the health minister, those people are now being seen. They are so grateful for that investment in the health system that not only are they publicly thanking our wonderful Caboolture Hospital and Queensland Health but also they are sending me letters. They are writing in saying, 'Thank goodness for your government and your investment in health because I am now seeing a doctor. I am now getting the treatment I need.'

Not only does this joke of a bill continue the horror story that is the LNP's health policy in government; it also has no support from key stakeholders. Do the nurses support it? No. Does the Health Ombudsman himself support it? I did not see any submission in support of it. In fact, what did the Health Ombudsman say when he was questioned by the committee? He said—

I do not see it sitting comfortably with the existing functions, because the existing functions are around managing health complaints and, fundamentally, protecting the health and safety of the public.

So the Health Ombudsman does not want it. The nurses do not want it. The union that represents white-collar workers in our health system does not want it. The Together union does not want it. The director-general of the department opposed it. The member for Caloundra did not produce any evidence that shows the AMA supports it, either. He should show us evidence that the doctors support it. Some other speakers may have already referred to the fact that on 26 October 2014 the member for Southern Downs, in respect of something very similar to what is being proposed to the House tonight, did not support the concept either. Even their own leader does not support this concept.

No-one wants this bill. Is it any wonder that only seven per cent of the LNP party room is prepared to speak on the bill tonight? It is only the member for Caloundra and three others. That equates to seven per cent. Out of all of Queensland, only the member for Caloundra and seven per cent of the party room of the LNP actually support this. Shame on them.

This bill demonstrates a lack of awareness of the activities and initiatives already being undertaken in relation to waiting list reporting. The Queensland Health Hospital Performance website currently publishes information on the activity and performance of public hospitals. The Palaszczuk government has undertaken, in line with its election commitments, to release health statistics around waiting lists and to maintain and expand the public release of hospital performance data. As a result, the Department of Health has commenced publishing additional data about elective surgery performance, rural hospital patient surveys and maternity patient experience. The government also announced the introduction of interim elective surgery targets in 2015 with the intention of undertaking broad consultation to review the appropriateness of these targets in the longer term.

The government is committed to developing a genuine, balanced and realistic approach to addressing wait times at all points in the patient journey. That is critical. We have to make sure we are honest about wait times at all points in the patient journey. One mob of people who were not honest about that is those opposite when they were last in government. They said that people did not even exist. That is because they were not honest about wait times at all points in the patient journey.

The interim elective surgery targets require that 98 per cent of category 1 patients receive their elective surgery within the clinically recommended time frame of 30 days and that 95 per cent of category 2 and category 3 patients receive their elective surgery within the clinically recommended time frames of 90 and 365 days respectively.

The 2015-16 state budget also allocated \$361.2 million over four years to reduce the number of people waiting longer than clinically recommended for a specialist outpatient appointment. In line with another of the Palaszczuk government's election commitments, the Department of Health is also undertaking a review of the role of the Health Ombudsman. The outcomes of this review require consideration before any changes to the Health Ombudsman's functions could be contemplated.

This bill is a joke. This bill continues the message we heard during the LNP's three years in government—a horror story being inflicted on our health system. Queenslanders will not wear it. Every time they hear the LNP utter the words 'wait time' they know that they are being taken for mugs. I oppose the bill and encourage all members to oppose it.