




Speech By
Hon. Yvette D'Ath

MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE

Record of Proceedings, 12 May 2016

HOSPITAL AND HEALTH BOARDS (SAFE NURSE-TO-PATIENT AND MIDWIFE-TO-PATIENT RATIOS) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (8.27 pm): I will be very brief because I am eager to see this vote brought on so that this can be introduced into law as soon as possible, but there are some things I want to say. I am not going to try to articulate the arguments in support of this bill or what it seeks to achieve. I believe that has been done very well by my parliamentary colleagues and of course the Minister for Health. However, I have heard some arguments from the other side that the rationale has not been made out. It is not that complicated: if you reduce the ratio of patients to nurses then you are going to get greater care. It is that simple, and that is what this bill seeks to do.

I wanted to rise and speak briefly tonight because in 2014, when I put myself forward in the Redcliffe by-election, I met many wonderful nurses. I was referred to by the other side as a liar when I said that nurses had been sacked. I was told that they all went voluntarily, that they all left QHealth because they wanted to and they went happily. In fact, those were the words of the LNP candidate at the time who said she was a nurse. She stood there and said that people voluntarily left, but time and time again I met those nurses and I heard their stories and how sad they were about losing their jobs. They did not go because they wanted to. They had fears of finding of another job and had concerns, especially those who were mums and single mums, about whether they were going to have to move and potentially move out of Queensland to find alternative work.

Tonight I stand here on their behalf to say thank you. I promised that if I were elected I would come into this House and fight for them and, under the leadership of Annastacia Palaszczuk in opposition, I did. We were a small group, but we were a loud group. We took up the fight. Then we had the great pleasure to form government and we continued that fight. I thank the Premier for her leadership. I thank the Minister for Health for his leadership. I also acknowledge the member for Greenslopes and his passion.

I also want to mention Beth Mohle from the Queensland Nurses' Union. I thank Beth for her strong advocacy for her members and the great work that she has done as well as her organisers, her staff, her delegates, her members and all of those nurses and midwives, not just today because it is International Nurses Day but for every day that they get up and go to work. They put themselves out there. They are compassionate. Being a nurse is about safety, it is about the care of others—ourselves and our loved ones. Today is an opportunity to say thank you and to say that the Palaszczuk government truly values what nurses do. I commend the bill to the House.