




Speech By
Ann Leahy

MEMBER FOR WARREGO

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ADJOURNMENT

South West Hospital and Health Service Board

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (10.27 pm): I rise to advise the House how the state Labor government has taken the locals out of the local hospital boards in Queensland, particularly in south-west Queensland. I wish to thank the former members of the South West Hospital and Health Service Board. I particularly wish to thank the former board chair, Lindsay Godfrey, who lives locally in the Cunnamulla district with his family. Councillor Godfrey has brought great stability, care and dedication to the board and is well regarded by the over 800 staff who provide the front-line services across the south-west.

Local hospital boards were an initiative of the former LNP minister for health, Lawrence Springborg, during the LNP government. One of the reasons these local boards were implemented was that of the Dr Patel case. I have no doubt that the Dr Patel case and others would not have occurred if there were locals on local hospital boards at that time.

This Labor government has failed the south-west residents and the hardworking HHS staff by ignoring qualified local applicants and the Aboriginal community. Instead, the Labor government has appointed only three members who actually live in the board area, which is larger than the state of Victoria. The other five members including the chair are fly-in fly-out—a 62 per cent FIFO board.

This email I received from a member of the Aboriginal Community sums up the feeling of the south-west residents. It states—

I would like to express my disappointment of the new nominations to the SWHHS Board and the new Chair of the SWHHS.

I am bitterly disappointed at the lack of faith the Minister has in the people of the South West region and their ability to manage their own health service.

We do not need fly in, fly out Chairs or Directors sitting on our Boards determining our health needs of the south west.

We live in the region, we understand the health needs, we determine our priorities and how best to find the solutions as we are the grassroots people.

This Board has become so corporate focused that I believe it is not in the best interest of the South West region to be governed this way.

I strongly believe the policy for nominations to the relevant HHS Boards across Qld needs to be reviewed.

The Palaszczuk Labor government needs to explain to the people of the south-west why the locals who understand the challenges of delivering health services in regional and remote areas were overlooked for their FIFO Labor mates from Brisbane.