




Speech By
Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE

Record of Proceedings, 23 March 2017

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Health Services, Federal Funding

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (10.20 am): National partnership agreements have played a critical role in delivering better health outcomes for Queenslanders and were instrumental in reducing waiting lists for elective surgery and dental treatment. I know that is a view held by many members of this House. For example, in 2014 a member of this House said—

... we, as the Queensland government, have a problem with Canberra and that problem relates to the national partnership programs and agreements that have been unilaterally terminated as part of the Federal budget.

The member went on to say—

Without a doubt though, the most pressure relates to Health. The problem is serious ...

In a moment of rare insight the member went even further, saying—

From 2017-18 the Federal Government is turning its back on the challenges of health funding.

...

... the Federal Government thinks the States can survive with less. Their funding falls well short of what is required to meet the reasonable expectations of Queenslanders.

Who said those words in this House? It was none other than the then treasurer, the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Clayfield, in his 2014 budget speech.

What has happened to the member for Clayfield since 2014? Where is the fearless warrior standing up for cuts against Queensland? The bulldog has become a lapdog. The Leader of the Opposition is now an apologist for the Turnbull government—happy to run interference at every possible turn, silent when it cut public funding for dental services, saying not a word when it terminated funding for mental health services, missing in action when it slashed funding for aged care. The Leader of the Opposition could not care less about the Sunshine Coast University Hospital medical school. He is no longer a voice for Queensland but a yes-man for his LNP mates in Canberra.

A number of partnership agreements are up for renewal this June, and the signs for Queensland are not good. There is yet no commitment from the federal government to renew the national partnership agreement on breast screening—of all things! The Leader of the Opposition talks in this House about protecting the rights of women, yet he will not stand up to ensure funding for breast screening continues in Queensland. There is no commitment to funding in relation to rheumatic fever, which disproportionately affects Indigenous Queenslanders.

What a pity that those opposite chose 'Mr Strong Choices' and not 'Mr Strong Principles'. Apart from his pathological obsession with asset sales, he stands for nothing. He is a hollow man. Everyone knows it. The quiet members of the opposition know that. They know that they put a dud into the leader's chair. He will not stand up for Queensland. He will say anything and do anything to protect his political interests, and Queenslanders know the truth.