



Speech By  
**Hon. Cameron Dick**


**MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE**

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**PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

**Liberal National Party, Health Services**

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (10.20 am): One of the least inspiring sights in Australian politics—other than the leadership of the member for Clayfield—has been the slow and inexorable decline of the LNP across the nation. But there is one thing that binds them altogether—one last ideal, one final frontier, one last policy prescription that is the glue that keeps the whole ramshackle group together, one grand project that they can all agree on—and that is health cuts.

Who will ever forget in our state the gleeful exuberance with which the Leader of the Opposition swung his axe across the health system when he was the treasurer? Last night, we saw the audacity of the member for Surfers Paradise in getting up in this House and saying that the LNP were 'health friends'—4,400 health workers were sacked, including 1,800 nurses and midwives. Under the LNP, the waiting list for the waiting list blew out to 104,000 Queenslanders. NGOs were defunded and gagged. Sexual health was confined to the scrap heap. There was open warfare with doctors. Mental health services were underfunded. The Barrett Adolescent Centre was closed without replacement. With friends like that, who needs enemies?

Of course, not to be outdone, successive federal coalition governments have doubled down on health cuts. No area has been spared—dental care, mental health, aged care—on top of the \$10 billion cut from Queensland's share of growth funding promised under the National Health Reform Agreement. In that glorious tradition comes the next chapter in the miserable saga of the LNP's antihealth campaign and that is Scott Morrison's budget. In his speech, the federal Treasurer made it clear that the only reason he was abandoning the devastating cuts of the 2014 Hockey budget was that he could not get them through the Senate. In other words, they are not dead, they are not buried, they are not cremated; they are in the crypt waiting to see the light of day again. It will be the dawn of the undead LNP cuts.

The LNP is and always has been ideologically opposed to Medicare, public hospitals and the concept of free and universal health care. How do we know that? Last week, we were reminded of that when Prime Minister 'Trumbull'—sorry, Turnbull—congratulated President Trump on his decision to scrap health care for millions of Americans. A leopard cannot change its spots and any claims that the LNP is now 'health friends' is seriously as contrived as the member for Clayfield having a beer in a rural pub.