




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA

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ADJOURNMENT

Gold Coast, Police Resources

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (7.06 pm): I rise this evening to speak on a shocking story that was covered by the *Gold Coast Bulletin* last week. The story revealed a Gold Coast police officer is currently under investigation for allegedly taking kickbacks from funeral home directors and interfering with bodies at the morgue of a hospital. The details of this case are extremely disturbing including allegations the female officer took money and gifts from funeral home directors in return for referring families of deceased to their business while she worked at a morgue as well as allegations the officer removed things from bodies, including cutting a lock of a deceased woman's hair to send to her family overseas. These are just some of the allegations that have been made public. I shudder to think what further details have been kept from us.

While no charges have been laid, there is an investigation underway and the police officer in question has been transferred from the morgue at the Gold Coast University Hospital and is now working under supervision. This whole situation is disturbing to me on so many levels. Firstly, there is the thought of this happening to me or to my loved ones. Being taken advantage of in a time of grief like this is appalling and having a body tampered with is simply unthinkable. I would like those opposite—and this happened under their watch—to pause and take a moment to imagine this happening to them or their loved ones. It is not a nice thought, is it?

Why have Labor allowed this to happen over an extended period of time to Gold Coast families? Why have Labor, despite the obvious and growing needs of our community, consistently reduced funding and resources for police on the Gold Coast? This horrible situation is just another example of how the Palaszczuk government is failing Queenslanders and failing the Gold Coast. The Palaszczuk government have reneged on their promise of 44 additional officers made last year during the election campaign. All up, the Gold Coast is short 88 officers, depending on which number and which day we look at it. This is despite the Gold Coast having a rapidly increasing population and a huge crime rate. That is 88 fewer officers out in the community protecting families and catching criminals.

The Gold Coast crime district is having its funding secretly funnelled into nearby Logan, and the Premier and her ministers have been caught out telling fibs in relation to the numbers. While the LNP are busy fighting for more police on the Gold Coast to keep our community safe, the Premier and the member for Gaven are too busy talking about *Dora the Explorer*.