




Speech By
Aaron Harper

MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA

Record of Proceedings, 1 May 2019

MOTION

Queensland Health; No Confidence in Minister for Health

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (5.37 pm): I rise to speak against the member for Mudgeeraba's motion. This motion is just another example of those opposite continually talking down the world-class healthcare system we have here in Queensland, including the fantastic and dedicated Health staff and our Queensland Ambulance Service. We have heard about the issues raised in the motion regarding ramping. Can I say that after 28 years of serving with the Queensland Ambulance Service I think I can speak with a degree of authority about what those people opposite did in their time with regard to ramping and the pressure it put on our state government when we came to office. Those opposite should be very familiar with a document, the ambulance ramping document, the *Metropolitan Emergency Department Access Initiative*. Page 4 talks about access block.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr HARPER: If members opposite want to understand ramping they have to understand the causes. Those opposite should listen and learn because on page 4 it talks about access block. When there is access block, when hundreds of beds are taken up by elderly people who cannot get a bed in residential—

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Buderim, you don't need to be quarrelling across the chamber with the man on his feet.

Mr HARPER: Access block is about patients being blocked from entering the hospital. We have hundreds of people who should be in residential aged-care facilities. Due to the royal commission we are hearing right now about what is going on. We are also hearing right now in our committee about the great burdens placed on our public healthcare system and aged-care system. It is a population wave. It is not going to be stopped; we need to prepare for it. What did the LNP do? I table that document.

Tabled paper: Metropolitan Emergency Department Access Initiative report, dated July 2012, titled 'A report on Ambulance Ramping in metropolitan hospitals' [\[680\]](#).

I worked with United Voice on the state council, and I applaud the team that worked with the QAS on that. They had it for three years and they did nothing at all. You did not increase staff. You did not increase vehicles. Since 2015, when we came into government, we put 532 ambulance staff into the Queensland Ambulance Service. That is a great Labor initiative. Why did we have to put 532 in? Because did you nothing in your time. You sat on your hands—

Mr LANGBROEK: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Order! Member for Thuringowa, direct your comments through the chair.

Mr LANGBROEK: Mr Deputy Speaker, you have just dealt with my point of order.

Mr HARPER: Their record is a generation of failure. They let down the health system. They let down the people of Queensland under their watch. When they could have done something with the MEDAI initiative they chose to do nothing. They put a massive load onto the Labor government, which came out and restored front-line services. We are restoring hundreds of beds back into hospitals. I have to ask those opposite if they received funding from the federal government during their time. No. Did they increase funding for the Ambulance Service? No. Did they increase funding for aged-care beds? No.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members! Order!

Mr HARPER: It takes a Labor government with record Health budgets year after year to counter the growing ageing population. We will continue to support the fantastic hardworking nurses, doctors and paramedics of the Queensland health system who deliver quality patient care. I am sick and tired of those opposite talking down our health system. We should be celebrating every single interaction they do. The Queensland Ambulance Service—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Order! Pause the clock. Member for Nicklin and member for Buderim, I have already given you a warning. You are now officially warned under the standing orders for calling out and quarrelling across the chamber with the member on his feet.

Mr HARPER: It was a Labor government that increased the workforce of ambulance paramedics. It was a Labor government that brought in paramedic registration. It was a Labor government that brought in 600 new ambulances. It was a Labor government that brought in training to reduce assaults on our front-line staff. This Labor government cares about our Queensland Ambulance Service paramedics. I am proud to have worked with them. Those opposite should hold their heads in shame for what they did by cutting, sacking and selling.