



Speech By  
**Brittany Lauga**


**MEMBER FOR KEPPEL**

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Record of Proceedings, 23 October 2019

**MOTION**

**Queensland Health**

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (5.47 pm): I rise today to oppose the motion moved by the member for Mudgeeraba. On this side of the chamber we stand proudly with the people of Queensland and, in particular, the people of Central Queensland because it is only the Palaszczuk government that invests in health projects in our part of Queensland. We were hit so incredibly hard by the Newman government's cuts. They sacked 197 staff from Central Queensland hospitals, including 41 nurses and midwives. These were cuts that the member for Nanango and the member for Mudgeeraba made happen with their support for that cruel government. How on earth the member for Nanango sat around the Cabinet Budget Review Committee table and agreed to the sacking of 41 nurses and midwives from Central Queensland hospitals is absolutely beyond comprehension.

I have heard firsthand from doctors and nurses at that hospital talk about the impact that it had not only on those people but also on the workload of the remaining doctors and nurses at the hospital. As Campbell Newman's protégé, the member for Nanango backed savage cuts to health, sacking 4,400 health workers, including 1,800 nurses and midwives across Queensland—including the 41 nurses and midwives from the Central Queensland Health and Hospital Service. They shut down nursing homes across Queensland and attempted to sell off the land. When they were in government they had the North Rockhampton Nursing Centre primed and ready to sell off. When we came back to government we very proudly took it off the market and we have refurbished it.

**Ms Grace** interjected.

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for McConnel and Leader of the Opposition, you will both cease your interjections across the chamber.

**Mrs LAUGA:** We have invested \$8½ million in the North Rockhampton Nursing Centre with a brand-new dementia wing and kitchen. Those opposite had that centre, which provides support and treatment for dementia patients in our North Rockhampton people, primed and ready to sell off. They cut staff at BreastScreen Queensland and they slashed community health initiatives, including GP Connections. If given the chance we all know the LNP will again take the scalpel to Queensland's hospitals.

Since 2015 the Palaszczuk Labor government has been rebuilding Central Queensland's health services. We have been hiring new doctors, nurses, specialists and allied health professionals, increasing funding and building new health facilities. At the last budget we invested a record \$622 million a year for Central Queensland's health and hospital services, an increase of \$12½ million on the previous year.

**Mrs Frecklington:** And outcomes? Patient outcomes?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Nanango!

**Mrs LAUGA:** From March 2015 to March 2019 we hired an additional 93 doctors and 164 nurses in Central Queensland. If the member for Nanango wants to know about what kind of improvements that has resulted in in our health service, the member for Nanango just has to walk into our hospitals and talk to any of the doctors and nurses about how much easier and better it is working in our health and hospital services in Central Queensland.

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The Leader of the Opposition will put her comments through the chair.

**Mrs LAUGA:** We have invested in frontline staff who keep up their wonderful work to keep up with demand.

We have delivered a new 597-bay car park for people who use Rockhampton Hospital. The state Labor government contributed \$15.6 million to that project. We have just committed \$10 million for an upgrade to the Rockhampton Ambulance Station. We are building Gladstone's \$42 million emergency department upgrade.

At the 2017 election, we listened to the people of Central Queensland when they said they needed a residential drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre. However, we have had to fight those opposite and we have had to fight members of the Morrison government to get it done. We are going to deliver that 42-bed facility. We are going to deliver that project, which will improve people's lives and help people and families who are suffering.

I remind the House that the LNP's federal member for Capricornia has demonstrated a complete lack of empathy for those suffering with drug and alcohol addiction. She circulated a petition titled 'Stop Labor's Reckless Rehab Centre'. It would be interesting to know whether those opposite supported and signed the petition titled 'Stop Labor's Reckless Rehab Centre'. Did the member for Mudgeeraba and shadow health minister sign the petition circulated by the member for Capricornia? It was a terrible petition that included statements such as 'With ice addiction comes increased crime, used needles in our playgrounds'. I will not support the motion.