




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR NANANGO

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MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST

New Zealand, Shootings; New South Wales, Election; Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance; Liberal National Party, Policies

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): No words can describe the depth of the evil that descended on Christchurch. Mosques should be places of safety and sanctuary, but at Friday prayers on 15 March they became places of slaughter. My heart breaks for those who were murdered, for those who survived and those who lost loved ones. Their grief cannot be imagined. I was horrified by the cold-blooded butchery of victims chosen simply because of their faith and I was sickened that the terrorist responsible was Australian. He came from this country and we must reflect on that. It is disturbing to realise such evil exists within our society. We cannot ignore it and we must confront all of those who are consumed by racial and religious hatred. Australia must never be a haven for hate.

On behalf of the LNP Queensland, I want to congratulate Gladys Berejiklian on her victory in the New South Wales state election. New South Wales has a strong economy. It has the lowest unemployment in the nation and New South Wales is building vital infrastructure. It is an example of what a dynamic, centre-right government can achieve. What a contrast to the Palaszczuk government in Queensland. Under the Palaszczuk Labor government we have low growth, we have high unemployment and we have an infrastructure crisis.

Mr Bleijie: And ministers protesting against each other.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: On top of that, we have ministers protesting against each other. We also have a health system that is in crisis. My three daughters were born in a regional hospital. I personally know what it is like to live three hours away from your nearest maternity centre. I know how frightening it is to be that distance away from a maternity hospital, so I sympathise with the young regional mums of today living in the bush in Queensland. Labor's own maternity task force has confirmed that the number of babies born before they reach rural hospitals has doubled since 2001. It is no coincidence that Labor governments—successive Labor governments—have closed 26 regional maternity services over their time. Babies are now 65 per cent more likely to die in country areas than if they are born in Brisbane. That is a shameful statistic.

This callous Labor government does not care about bush mums. It certainly does not care about their babies. Babies are dying because of the policy settings of this Palaszczuk government and Labor's health cuts. Labor has made this crisis and its health minister has done nothing to fix it. Where is the health minister on this? He is more interested in renaming hospitals and playing the blame game than fixing his own health crisis in Queensland. I believe that every woman, no matter where she chooses to live, has the right to proper health care in this state and has the right to deliver her baby in her community where she chooses to live. The last LNP government reopened maternity centres, and the next LNP government will reopen maternity centres.

It is the opposition's duty to highlight problems which Queenslanders face, but it is also the opposition's role to offer solutions, and that is exactly what we have been doing. There are few bigger problems than the crime wave that has been unleashed under this Labor government. The Labor government's record is appalling. Robbery is up 61 per cent since 2015, armed robbery is up 46 per cent, serious assault is up 35 per cent and car theft is up 45 per cent. We know the member for Stretton knows all about car theft: someone stole his ute with his face on it while it was sitting outside his own electorate office. The criminals are getting that desperate!

Crime is out of control but, while Labor has slashed \$44 million from its police budget, we have a plan. The LNP has a plan to protect our communities. We will give the police the resources and the laws that they need to do their job. In the last few weeks the LNP has announced policies that will cut crime and protect Queenslanders. Nowhere has seen a bigger surge in crime than Townsville. The city has seen robberies increase by 113 per cent. Labor promised the city more police at the last election, but all Townsville has got is more criminals. The police are not getting any help from the Palaszczuk government. The last LNP government brought police helicopters to Queensland and the next LNP government will provide one for Townsville. PolAir choppers have made it easier to track and arrest offenders. What is good for the south-east should be good for North Queensland. There will be no hiding for criminals in Townsville under the LNP.

The LNP also has plans to protect Queensland kids. A future LNP government will introduce a public child sex offender register that will let parents know if there is a sexual predator in their suburb. Every parent has the right to know if someone is a threat to their child. Protecting children and protecting kids is more important than protecting the identity of paedophiles. If the offenders are not happy about being identified, I have some advice for them: do not rape kids. Do not sexually abuse kids. Do not whine about your rights when you have destroyed innocent lives. I will not make any apology for being tough on child sex offenders. These people have destroyed innocent young lives. We know the Palaszczuk Labor government has been far too soft on these criminals. Why does the Palaszczuk government consistently look after the criminals rather than the victims? We know that it is this Labor government that allows some of these vile sexual offenders to apply for blue cards. The LNP will close that loophole that would allow would-be rapists and even child killers to apply for those blue cards.

We will also protect Queenslanders from violence on our roads. We know that road rage is a growing menace. We have all seen footage on the TV news of drivers losing control and lashing out at other road users. We have seen drivers waving meat cleavers and even bashing old men at traffic lights—unacceptable behaviour—and this violence has to stop. The LNP plans to introduce two new offences to crack down on road rage. Every driver who loses control loses their licence. The worst offenders can be jailed for up to five years, because we know that drivers and people on our roads deserve to get home safe. The LNP wants every Queensland community to be safe. We need to give our police the tools to fight crime. We will stop Labor's rising tide of crime in its tracks and we will make Queensland safe again.

With the small amount of time that I have left I would like to acknowledge the students from Geham State School who are in this chamber. What a great local regional school. A lot of those children were born in regional hospitals. If it were not for their great parents who have chosen to live in the bush and live in the regions, we would not have amazing schools like Geham State School. It is wonderful to see you here and—

Mr Bleijie: We'll air-con your classrooms.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Absolutely. With the last 10 seconds that I have remaining on the clock, a future LNP government will air-condition every classroom in Geham State School.