



Speech By  
**Ros Bates**

**MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA**

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Record of Proceedings, 30 April 2019

## **HEALTH LEGISLATION (SCOPE OF PRACTICE) AMENDMENT REGULATION**

### **Disallowance of Statutory Instrument**

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (5.32 pm): I move—

That Part 3 of the Health Legislation (Scope of Practice) Amendment Regulation 2018, Subordinate Legislation No. 174 of 2018, be disallowed.

Today is the last chance for the Lady Cilento name to continue to be enshrined in legislation, which is why all members of the House should support this disallowance motion. There is no greater example of how Labor's priorities are all wrong than wasting taxpayers' money to rip Lady Cilento's name off our main children's hospital. Our public health system has lurched from one crisis to another under the Palaszczuk Labor government and sick and injured Queenslanders are paying the price. Hospitals across Queensland are literally bursting at the seams. Promised hospital upgrades are years away from completion and maternity services have been cut in regional Queensland. Our hardworking nurses, doctors, midwives and paramedics need more help on the front line to improve patient care.

Patient care should always be a priority, but what we saw last year with the disgraceful renaming of the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital was a government that has its priorities all wrong. One would think the priority of every government would be ensuring our sickest kids have enough beds and the health services they need, not wasting taxpayers' money ripping names off hospitals. However, under Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk and her incompetent health minister, Steven Miles, that was not the case. Images of a child receiving treatment in a kitchenette because of a shortage of beds should have been enough for the Premier to show some leadership and reverse the name change. The desperate pleas from parents whose kids need treatment at the hospital and concerns around oncology bed shortages should have been enough for the Premier to show some leadership and reverse the name change. Revelations about a rigged poll used to justify the name change where it was shown that 17,719 yes votes came from 74 IP addresses and 6,269 of these votes were sourced from just four IP addresses should have been enough for the Premier to show leadership and reverse the name change. The rigged poll I might add is still being assessed by the Crime and Corruption Commission.

What did this Premier do? She went to lunch and dismissed the issue. She should have seen the issue for what it was and reversed the bad judgement call like we saw with the proposed renaming of a grandstand after a former Labor politician. Instead of wasting hundreds of thousands of taxpayers' dollars to change the name of Lady Cilento Children's Hospital, Labor should fix the health crisis by ending constant code yellows where our hospitals are in bed block; stop ambulance ramping that is increasing again under Labor; scrap Labor's controversial rapid off-load policy that the United Voice has said is putting patients' lives at risk; and restore funding to front-line services, not waste taxpayers' money renaming hospitals.

If the decision to waste taxpayers' money and rename the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital was not bad enough, the way the Cilento family has been treated by Labor has been nothing short of an absolute disgrace. The minister would not meet with the family before the decision was made and when he did meet with them he admitted that there had been a smear campaign by some doctors against Lady Phyllis Cilento. As reported on 23 November last year, the health minister, Steven Miles, said on camera five times that he never agreed with the Cilento family that there had been a smear campaign from some doctors against their mother and grandmother, Lady Phyllis Cilento. The only problem for the minister is that the Cilento family had a recording of him saying, 'I think some of the doctors in that campaign tried to do that.' Rather than admit that he had been caught out, both he and the Premier said they did not accept he had lied when denying the exchange. The Cilento family were not so generous. The minister was dragged kicking and screaming to actually meet with the Cilentos and basically did so after extreme pressure. The Premier has never even bothered to meet with the family and explain her government's decision.

Lady Phyllis Cilento was a pioneering female Queensland doctor. She is someone who should be celebrated, not denigrated. The son of the late Lady Phyllis Cilento, medical pioneer and author Dr David Cilento, said he was devastated by the decision to remove his mother's name from the exterior of the leading paediatric hospital. Dr David Cilento said the change was absolutely destroying his mother's legacy. Labor's health minister offered the Cilento family to name an auditorium or an art prize after her—a consolation prize the family described as deeply insulting. Lady Cilento's granddaughter Giovanna Volpe-Cilento said—

What they offered us was a sewing kit or something, or that we could have an art award, or we could name the auditorium after her.

The only time buildings get renamed is when someone is a criminal.

Our grandmother was not a criminal, she was someone who loved Queensland and Queenslanders, and who loved children, and served them for a very long time.

As I said earlier, the poll was a sham and completely unreliable. Dozens of yes votes in an online opinion poll used by the Queensland government to justify a decision to rename the state's main children's hospital may have emanated from ministerial offices, including that of the state health minister, Steven Miles, but Labor will not release the full IP addresses to prove otherwise. It is clear the survey was rigged, it has been corrupted by a few individuals and, overwhelmingly, the community was against the decision to rename, but Labor used this rigged poll to justify the change. Under questioning from the media, the health minister admitted ministerial staff probably did vote in the poll. He said it was probably true that the 75 yes votes had come from ministerial offices, his office among them.

Lady Cilento was a pioneering medical professional and advocate for health issues concerning women and children. She was ahead of her time in advocating natural childbirth, contraception, good nutrition and raising children with the benefit of vitamins. In 1974 she was declared Queensland's Mother of the Year. In 1977 her name was used for an award bestowed by the Nutritional Foods Association of Australia. In 1979 she became a Fellow of the International Academy of Preventive Medicine. In 1980 she was awarded life membership of the Australian Medical Association. In 1981 she was named Queenslander of the Year. In 1982 she was named Loyal Australian of the Year by the Assembly of Captive European Nations. In 1987 she was named Queensland Senior Citizen of the Year and awarded a medal of merit by the Australian chapter of the Legion of Frontiersmen of the Commonwealth. In 2013 the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital in Brisbane was named in her honour.

Lady Phyllis Cilento settled in Brisbane in 1928. She became renowned throughout the city as a general practitioner with a dedicated passion for obstetrics and women's and children's health. Her husband, Sir Raphael Cilento, was also a doctor. The couple had six children, the youngest of whom was the late actor Diane Cilento, who was married to Sean Connery from 1962 to 1973. Her legacy should be remembered and celebrated, not tarnished by the political decisions of this government.

The excuse used to change the name related to the need for international recognition and additional fundraising support from the foundation. In relation to the assertion that he supported the name change, the chair of the hospital foundation later rejected the claim. Labor claimed the name change would help the hospital with fundraising, but millionaire benefactors have pulled their support over the Lady Cilento name change so it has had the reverse impact. Judith and Trevor St Baker, who have donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to the hospital, have refused to provide more funding because of the name change decision. 'We told the board they should never contact us again,' Mrs St Baker said. 'I'm sympathetic to the cause, but to go ahead with removing the name of an outstanding Queenslander is insulting. It's unnecessary, ridiculous and a waste of money. We object to it and will find other ways to help sick kids and invest our philanthropic money.'

Nobel Laureate Peter Doherty has disputed a claim by the Queensland Premier that the state's name in itself could land rich research grants for medical staff agitating to rebrand Brisbane's main children's hospital. 'The Premier may have had feedback from researchers, but I would have thought that any effect would be minimal,' said Professor Doherty, a joint winner of the 1996 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine.

Organisations that represent nurses have claimed their members do not support the name change. The Nurses Professional Association of Queensland said it decided to register the name following backlash from members over the name change. NPAQ assistant secretary Jack McGuire said that registering the name meant it could not be hijacked and 'should the Minister decide to reuse the name, we will provide it back free of charge.' More than 85 per cent of the NPAQ members polled wanted the hospital's name to remain unchanged.

Queenslanders want a government that is focused on providing better health services and ensuring that our hardworking nurses, doctors, midwives and paramedics have the support and resources they need to improve patient care. Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk promised better local health services at the last state election, yet things have gone backwards. What Queenslanders did not vote for was hundreds and thousands of taxpayers' dollars to be wasted to change the name of a hospital rather than providing better health services for our sickest children.

Anyone who does not support this motion tonight should stand condemned for their actions. We will remind communities right up until the next state election so Queenslanders know that, when it comes to health, the priority of Queensland Labor is all wrong.