




Speech By
Tim Mander

MEMBER FOR EVERTON

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MOTION

Business Program

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.35 am): This government will go down in history as the government that has gone to the greatest lengths to avoid scrutiny. There is no greater example of that than the fact that tomorrow it will be three months since we have sat in this parliament. Despite the fact that there were many issues that needed to be looked at, in order to avoid scrutiny this government scrapped the parliamentary sitting week in December.

Every parliamentary sitting week we see the undermining of the principles of Westminster government, one of which is the opposition's role to keep the government accountable. We expect to have every opportunity to keep this government accountable so that it will make better decisions. There is no greater example of that than this morning when the health minister announced extra funding at the children's hospital. The only reason for that is the pressure from the opposition highlighting the fact that we had children receiving cancer treatment in the kitchenette of the Lady Cilento children's hospital. That is why each week we come in here to argue passionately our case to keep this government accountable. A good opposition will make sure that such an announcement, which was made this morning, will be made.

We also had the example of mental health patients being treated in the corridors of Logan Hospital. What happened? A week later, because of pressure from the opposition, because this opposition is keeping this government accountable, the embattled health minister made a late announcement about that hospital. At the moment, our Queensland hospitals are crying out for help. Just last week a senior doctor at Redlands Hospital was crying out for help, saying, 'Nobody is listening. We are bursting at the seams. We have ambulance stretchers at the doors queuing up waiting to come in and we have a government that continues to ignore what is happening in our hospitals.' Meanwhile, during the period that we have not had parliamentary sittings, this government went through with its commitment to change the name of the Lady Cilento children's hospital and wasted \$500,000 on doing that.

The services in this state are in crisis. There can be no better example of that than our services in our hospital system, which account for about 30 per cent of the budget—an incredible amount of expenditure. It is important that the opposition members get every opportunity to raise such issues. The Leader of the House expects us to be grateful and thankful that we are going to get an opportunity to ask questions of the minister at the end of a debate. I thank the Attorney-General for the great privilege of being able to ask questions of the minister. I totally agree with my colleague the leader of opposition business. The Attorney-General quotes figures. The next time she does that I will ask her to use another KPI. We already know how many speeches were made by opposition members and government members. Another KPI should be how many debates were gagged. How many members whose names were on the speaking list did not get the opportunity to be involved in a debate?

Ms Simpson: It is unprecedented!

Mr MANDER: I will take that interjection from the member for Maroochydore. It is unprecedented. It has never been done before in any Queensland parliament. It is making this parliament a mockery. It is making this parliament a joke. The opposition cannot ask the questions that it wants to. The time that is needed cannot be spent in the summing-up where the minister goes through those consideration in detail issues. It is simply not good enough. Every sitting day we will debate this issue until the situation changes.