



Speech By  
**Aaron Harper**


**MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA**

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Record of Proceedings, 21 May 2020

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Thuringowa Electorate, Coronavirus**

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.21 pm): I want to begin by thanking my community for responding so well to the coronavirus emergency. They have done that by following practical measures such as social distancing, hand hygiene and earlier on just shopping for essential items, but as we ease the restrictions those have started to expand. We continue to follow the staunch leadership of our Premier, who follows the advice of the Chief Health Officer. I know that she has the health, welfare and safety of Queenslanders as her priority.

The people to whom I speak in my community and hundreds of people I have spoken to recently are saying, 'Stay the course.' They do not want borders opened too soon. They do not want community transmission. They want a careful and measured response, and that is what we are getting from our government. We have just heard the contribution of the member for Glass House, who said the worst is over. Good grief! There are 1,400 people a day dying in the US and right across the world as this coronavirus continues, but the LNP would open the borders now.

**Mr Powell** interjected.

**Ms Simpson** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms McMillan): Member for Glass House, you have had your turn. Member for Maroochydore, you are up next.

**Mr HARPER:** I did not realise the LNP had a crystal ball and could say that the worst is over. Community transmission is still present—

**Mr Powell** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Glass House, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr HARPER:** Community transmission continues in New South Wales and Victoria. We should not put people at risk too soon. We have a measured and cautious response through our plan, and that is what we should stick to. The LNP should work with the government in a bipartisan way. That is what people want: they want leadership. They want to listen to the Chief Health Officer. They do not want to put people at risk. It is not worth it. At this stage we must be careful in our approach.

**Mr Hart** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Burleigh.

**Mr HARPER:** The LNP would rather be stuck in the weeds searching for political relevance. They certainly did not stand up for the 5,000 Virgin workers.

**Mr Hart** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Burleigh, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr HARPER:** Regional Queensland needs a second carrier. We need those jobs and I am thankful we are getting in there. Do you know what else I am thankful for? The 6,000 nurses we have put back into Queensland Health, the 2,000 doctors, the 500 paramedics and the public health officers who increased capacity and testing for coronavirus. The LNP sacked 4,800 Health staff, and that is shameful. I am glad we have restored frontline jobs. We have been able to respond to this because we have done that under a Labor government.