




Speech By
Ann Leahy

MEMBER FOR WARREGO

Record of Proceedings, 16 June 2020

MOTION

Coronavirus, Economic Response

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (3.43 pm): I am disappointed that again we have a piecemeal approach to dealing with the economic crisis that the Palaszczuk Labor government is presiding over in Queensland. We had a health crisis, but they have moved that to an economic crisis. It is telling that the Palaszczuk Labor government was the last government to offer any real form of economic assistance but the first government to cancel a full state budget. Having no state budget means that there is no plan and no economic security for Queenslanders. Local governments are working on and delivering their budgets, but the state government is not.

If Labor members really want to provide some certainty and kickstart the economy, they need to announce the date when the borders will reopen. It might be of interest to some members opposite that the border closures are impacting ratepayers right across the state. My electorate covers some 1,000 kilometres of the borders with South Australia and New South Wales. Last week I was in the Paroo shire, where it is costing \$40,000 of ratepayers' money to keep the border closed. There is no compensation from the state government.

The state government is concerned about infection coming across the border, but the Northern Territory has zero cases. The other day in Morven I was speaking with three guys who are essential workers in the Northern Territory. There are no flights backwards and forwards. Every two weeks they drive thousands and thousands of kilometres to get to work and home again. Even though there are no cases of COVID-19 in the Northern Territory, those men cannot fly because this state has not opened the border. Airlines fly across borders and they have to fly in sectors. We need to open the South Australian and Northern Territory borders. If the government is not going to open the New South Wales border, it should open those.

Dr Miles interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Weir): Order! Pause the clock. Member for Murrumba, I note that you are on the speaking list, so you will get a turn. At the moment, it is the turn of the member for Warrego.

Ms LEAHY: It goes to show that the members opposite think that Queensland stops in the south-east corner. It is interesting to see that. The Palaszczuk Labor government is spending less of the state's revenue on infrastructure than any other state. I do not see any road infrastructure funding coming through in this notice of motion. If we look at the money that is being removed from QTRIP, affecting North-West, West and South-West Queensland, that funding is going backwards. The overall allocation is being reduced. The Auditor-General has identified a backlog of maintenance worth \$5 billion. One only has to drive the roads in Western Queensland to see the impact that that has had. That is \$5 billion—\$894 million in the south-west region alone—of road money that is not being invested.