




Speech By
Ann Leahy

MEMBER FOR WARREGO

Record of Proceedings, 10 September 2020

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Queensland Border Closure, Exemptions

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (2.12 pm): It is a few minutes past two o'clock and I wish to extend my deepest sympathy to Sarah Caisip and her family. Unfortunately, Sarah's sad case is not unique. Jane Cadzow's 87-year-old mum is gravely ill in Queensland and Jane lives on the outskirts of Canberra. As we all know, somehow Canberra is strangely designated a COVID-19 hotspot so Jane is barred from entering Queensland in her mother's hour of need. On 31 August Jane applied for an exemption with a letter from her mother's doctor. Jane tells me she is fed up with the Palaszczuk Labor government's double standards. In her email yesterday she said—

I urge Anastacia Palaszczuk and the members of her government to reconsider their priorities and rediscover their humanity. Hosting AFL grand finals and campaigning for re-election is surely not as important as behaving with decency and compassion to the Queenslanders who most need their help.

I acknowledge the member for Moggill who raised this matter first thing this morning with the health minister's office.

Tina Merriman who lives in Canberra applied for a border exemption on 18 August to come to Queensland to provide care for her sister in Queensland. Tina contacted the COVID hotline but has heard nothing of her exemption request. Canberra has had no COVID-19 cases in more than 60 days. In fact, it has an outstanding record that more than satisfies the Chief Health Officer's definition of 28 days straight with no COVID cases. I can tell the House why the ACT has been declared a hotspot by this Labor government. It is all about keeping the coalition Treasurer, Josh Frydenberg, and our Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, out of Queensland during the election campaign. This Palaszczuk Labor government has no consistency and no compassion for families who need to be with their loved ones in their time of need.

We also have the case of doctors who cannot get exemptions on time. The community of Lightning Ridge had their medical services disrupted because the doctor who travels from Queensland to provide the three-week locum service did not get his exemption in a timely manner. I table an email received today from another doctor in a similar situation.

Tabled paper. Document, undated, titled 'We are all in this together' [1620](#).

There is a further case of Patricia Jones of Charleville who is 71 years of age. Patricia is at risk of losing her independence and ability to live at home on her own because of the disruption that has occurred to the ophthalmology services in Roma. I am advised that the September Roma clinic has been filled by a locum this month because the regular specialist could not get a border exemption. This is one of the largest satellite clinics in the state doing on average 50-plus operations and 100 clinic consultations. I am greatly concerned that the October clinic will be further disrupted and patients like Patricia will not get their surgery. The public of Queensland deserve better than the politically motivated actions of this Labor government that are heartless on families. This government is hopeless on compassion.