




Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

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MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST

2020 State Election; Gerber, Ms L

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): The next state election is just 269 days away, and 31 October will decide whether Queensland builds a stronger economy to reach its full potential or whether it will fall further and further behind under Labor. The future of our schools and hospitals will be decided at that election. The LNP is determined to win it because Queensland cannot afford another four years of this Labor government: another four years of high unemployment; another four years of falling education standards; and another four years of hospital waitlists blowing out. My team is determined to clean up after Labor's failures. We have the plan, we have the energy, we have the people to get Queensland working again and we have hit the ground running in 2020.

Last month I announced I had a 10-point plan to protect Queensland against bushfires. New South Wales, Canberra and Victoria have endured horrific conditions this fire season, but Queensland is a bushfire-prone state as well and we have had our fair share of tragedies recently. Bushfires devastated Central Queensland in 2018 and the last bushfire season has been just as fearsome: 6.6 million hectares of land was scorched and 49 homes destroyed. The bushfire season can be relentless and it can be deadly, and that is why an LNP government will do whatever it takes to keep our communities safe. Those opposite slashed bushfire prevention, but we are determined to ramp it up.

An LNP government will introduce new measures, including: a one-stop shop for mitigation applications; a 98 per cent completion target for hazard reduction activities; automatic approvals for permits after 15 days; and monitored grazing in state forests. I went to Bundaberg last month and joined with the member for Burnett to announce our support for rolling out traditional burning techniques practised by Indigenous rangers. The 10-point plan is a practical response to get Queensland bushfire ready. The plan is about being proactive, not reactive, to save both people and property. It is in stark contrast to those opposite, who failed to even give our rural fireys the masks they were promised over a year ago. Where are those masks? Those opposite failed to provide basic resources to our hardworking firefighters. They need to respond to a bushfire with the best protective equipment available, no ifs and no buts. The LNP will build a stronger economy so we can give our firefighters the resources and funding they need to do their job.

Time and time again those opposite failed to learn from emergencies, but they sure try to profit from those emergencies. Who would forget the member for Woodridge carrying the dinner bell from the fire ravaged Binna Burra Lodge? Just last week the Premier chose to be the only premier or first minister in this nation to score political points over the coronavirus health emergency. Something is seriously wrong with this government when the leader is so focused on cheap shots and not the health and safety of all Queenslanders. The Premier points the finger at the federal government with alarming regularity,

which shows the Premier is unable to take responsibility and is obviously out of her depth. The state government should work with federal and local governments during times of emergency, but this Labor government only works for themselves.

The interests of Queenslanders will always be the priority of an LNP government, and that is why I called for an emergency assistance package to support our tourism industry. Coronavirus could be as damaging as a flood or cyclone so we need a disaster level response. The LNP would support interest-free loans, local economic development plans and marketing campaigns to boost both domestic and international visitors. China is Queensland's most crucial international tourism market. Last year half a million Chinese tourists visited our shores and injected over \$1.5 billion into the domestic economy. The loss of this market will have a major impact on the state of Queensland, so the LNP's focus is on getting our tourism sector through this challenge. Businesses and jobs from the cape to Currumbin depend upon it. It is clear that it is only the LNP that has the energy and the plans Queensland needs.

We know that it is less than nine months until the next state election and the LNP is ready for that fight, but the first round will be in the Currumbin by-election. On behalf of the Liberal National Party I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jann Stuckey for her dedicated service to both Currumbin and Queensland. Jann courageously revealed her struggle with mental illness and has decided the time has come to step down from public service after 16 incredible years. I want to thank Jann and I wish Jann and her husband, Richard, all the very best for the next chapter of their lives.

Last week I had the pleasure to announce Laura Gerber as the LNP's candidate for Currumbin. Laura is a local, a mum and a successful lawyer. She worked at the Queensland Health Ombudsman and was previously a federal prosecutor—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Order!

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Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members, Mr Speaker made it very clear this morning that when he calls order it is to bring the House to order. There were two attempts made before I had to get to my feet. Let me assure you that will be the last time before I start warning people.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It is clear that those opposite are worried about the LNP's candidate for Currumbin, Laura Gerber. Laura is a local, a mum and a successful lawyer. Laura Gerber worked at the Queensland Health Ombudsman and was previously a federal prosecutor, helping convict smugglers and child exploitation offenders. Most importantly, Laura Gerber knows what matters to the Currumbin community and the people of Queensland. The Currumbin by-election will be a referendum on who can build a stronger economy. Laura Gerber and the LNP will build a stronger economy so we can provide better health services, better schools and higher paid local jobs for people in the Currumbin electorate. Those opposite on the Palaszczuk benches cannot deliver for the people of Currumbin because they have broken the economy with higher taxes, more debt and fewer jobs.

Currumbin is like so many other electorates in Queensland. It misses out because the Labor government has run out of money. The exception of course is the electorate of South Brisbane. Building a strong economy will allow the LNP to air-condition each and every state school classroom in Currumbin. It will also allow the LNP to cut hospital waiting times, to create more local job economies and, very importantly, to fix the M1.

The LNP has the right policies and we have an outstanding candidate in Laura Gerber. The voters of Currumbin will decide if their community is held back for another four years under this incompetent Labor government or if they will move forward with the LNP and our strong local candidate in Laura Gerber. The LNP is taking the people of Currumbin seriously. Laura Gerber takes the people of Currumbin seriously. She is a local. She was born on the Gold Coast. She got married under Elephant Rock. Her little girl, who I met on the weekend—

Ms Bates: Lily.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Yes, Lily. Lily started prep last year at Elanora State School. Laura Gerber and her husband have made the Currumbin electorate their home. They are proud to be locals there. I for one am looking forward to having Laura Gerber join us on our side of the parliament.