



Speech By  
**Joseph Kelly**


**MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES**

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## ADJOURNMENT

### Nurses and Midwives

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (6.25 pm): The first pair of hands that will hold you in this world will in many cases be those of a midwife and your last moments of comfort are likely to be delivered by a nurse. This year is the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife. Our community values these professions, but it has not always been the case. Some 200 years ago nurses were considered to be the lowest of the low and midwives were witches. This year marks 200 years since Florence Nightingale's birth. She was a mighty leader, an innovator and an educator. She could have done anything, but she chose nursing—a choice that her family did not support. She fought to be a nurse and she fought for her patients, and many of her innovations are seeing us through our current global pandemic.

I take time each year to celebrate our professions. It was great catching up with local nurses like Robyn from the Holland Park General Practice clinic and the oncology team from Greenslopes Private Hospital led by my favourite nurse, my wife, Susan. I am proud to be a nurse and I am proud to be part of a nursing government. Ratios, ratios, ratios. They save lives. Nurse navigators, digital hospitals, no-jab no-play, increasing smoking bans, restoring school based nursing—these are just some of the things that the Palaszczuk Labor government can be proud of and they are all things that demonstrate our commitment to nurses, midwives and the people they care for.

Florence fought to be a nurse, she fought for nursing and she fought for the patients she cared for, and that tradition is continued to this day by the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union. I want to acknowledge the outstanding leadership of my good friend Beth Mohle. Beth has worked with unions around the world to make sure nurses are safe during the COVID-19 period. We have achieved that here in Queensland and Australia, but sadly it is not the case overseas. In the last six months over 300 nurses have died as a result of caring for people with COVID-19, and let us not forget the many other health workers. In honour of those 300 nurses, I table a list of their names and I offer my sincere condolences to their families and the families of all of the other health workers who have died.

*Tabled paper.* Document, undated, titled 'COVID 19 nurse fatality register (as of 18/5/2020)' [815](#).

Many people want to do things to thank nurses and other health professionals—and it is greatly appreciated—but if you really want to support a nurse then keep up the good work that has led to the great outcomes that we have achieved in this state. We have done that by working together, by trusting health professionals, by practising social distancing, by learning to do things in new ways, by washing our hands, by getting flu shots. We have done it by backing the app and by looking after each other. That is how you thank a nurse and that is how you stop nurses from dying. I hope for a much happier international nurses and midwives day next year, but I give thanks every single day for the people who choose these magnificent professions.