




Speech By
Laura Gerber

MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

Record of Proceedings, 8 September 2020

ADJOURNMENT

Queensland Border Closure

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (7.09 pm): I rise this evening to highlight the hypocrisy of the Palaszczuk Labor government on our borders and ultimately to plead with the Premier to stop treating the borders as a political tool for her re-election and start showing some compassion and some common sense on our borders. It sickens me that a mother who needed emergency surgery could not rush across the border to a hospital 40 minutes away and instead had to wait several hours to fly to Sydney, tragically losing one of her unborn twins in the process, but the Palaszczuk Labor government is happy to have hundreds of AFL officials and their families stroll into Queensland and have free movement around a luxury resort, sunning themselves by the pool and drinking in the bar. Dannii Minogue can skip hotel quarantine and isolate in a Gold Coast mansion, but ordinary Queenslanders are not allowed to quarantine at home.

The kicker: a month ago I advocated on behalf of a Currumbin constituent for two members of her family to be granted an exemption to attend her late mother's funeral. The Palaszczuk Labor government granted the exemption a painful 10 days after the funeral. My constituent writes, 'This was heartbreaking and cruel by the Palaszczuk government.' There is complete chaos in the Palaszczuk Labor government's exemption process if exemptions are being granted after the date they are required. Because of it, my constituent's brother and nephew did not get to say goodbye. The pain and suffering for this family continues. My constituent's husband is a FIFO worker who is not permitted to return home due to Labor's restrictions. She writes—

I am suffering from feelings of isolation, loneliness, anxiety, depression, heart palpitations, sleeplessness and suicidal thoughts.

Sadly, this is not a unique story in my community. I have heard hundreds of these stories. Last week I spoke with a tradie who told me that the Palaszczuk Labor government has denied him and his construction colleagues their jobs.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Order! Member for Gladstone and member for Burleigh—

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members, I was talking. I have called you to order. Next time it will be a warning and I will be pretty close to chucking someone else out before we end.

Mrs GERBER: Tragically, this construction worker, who no longer has a job, told me that one of his colleagues recently committed suicide as a result. Today is World Suicide Prevention Day. Now, more than ever, my community needs the Palaszczuk Labor government to start showing some compassion and some common sense on our borders so that people living on the border can have the dignity of keeping their jobs and paying their bills and ultimately safeguarding the physical and mental wellbeing of my community. I raise these examples today because jobs are important to me, because my community's wellbeing is a priority for me and should be a priority for the Palaszczuk Labor government.