




Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR MILLER

Record of Proceedings, 13 August 2020

HEALTH LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (4.21 pm): I rise to support the legislation before the House. I would like to begin my contribution to this debate by thanking each and every health worker right across Queensland for all of the work they have done over the past six months. I would also like to thank all the hardworking healthcare professionals who live in my local community of Miller on the south side of which there are many given the proximity of the PA Hospital and the Mater Hospital, which is not too much further, and to the south, the QEII Hospital. I am very proud to represent an electorate with so many healthcare workers who do such a fantastic job. It has all been through the hard work of our doctors, nurses and pathologists that Queensland has been doing so well managing the health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Because we have done such a good job managing the health impacts of the pandemic so far, we have also been able to manage the economics as well—in fact, better than most—supporting our economy and creating jobs for Queenslanders.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to delivering the best healthcare system we can for Queenslanders and this legislation will work towards that commitment. This bill will also strengthen governance systems in our public health system by requiring health and hospital services to ensure that the best interests of patients are taken into account when using resources. Health and hospital services will also need to consider the effectiveness and efficiency of using resources for the public health system as a whole.

The legislation before the House will also strengthen this government's commitment to health equity for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, introducing guiding principles and mandating strategies to achieve culturally appropriate health care. These are important reforms that will strengthen our healthcare system and ensure that we are delivering the best health care that Queenslanders can receive and which they deserve. That is what we on this side of the House are committed to.

When those opposite were last in government, of course, the member for Nanango, as Campbell Newman's assistant minister, took the scalpel to Queensland's health system. Queensland will never forget that the LNP sacked 4,400 health workers, including 1,800 nurses and midwives.

Ms Bates: Cut the long-wait medical list from 67,000 down to zero.

Mr BAILEY: They do not like to hear it, but that is the truth. Queenslanders will never forget that it was the LNP that shut down nursing homes across Queensland and tried to sell off the land. Due to Labor's election and their defeat in 2015—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Order!

Mr BAILEY: Queenslanders will never forget that cut, sack and sell ideology of the LNP. We know they will do it again if they get a chance. We know it is in their DNA.

Ms Bates: Don't forget \$17 billion worth of asset sales either.

Mr BAILEY: We know when they interject, that is exactly what they have in mind. The Palaszczuk government have increased health funding by over \$4 billion, and thank God we have, given the events of the past six months. We have strengthened our healthcare system. We have brought in the people and the resources we need. We have invested in our system and, I might add, in places we are unlikely to ever represent as the Labor Party. I speak of places like Roma and Kingaroy. We have invested there because we are governing for all of Queensland. That is what we do. Those communities know that it is actually a Labor government that invests in the Kingaroy Hospital and the Roma Hospital and that those opposite had three years to do that and they did not. That is their record.

We have restored frontline health services that those on the other side so callously slashed. We remember their terrible relationship with our doctor community. We remember those meetings of doctors at the Pineapple Hotel in Brisbane after the assaults on them, metaphorically speaking, from the premier of the day and the government of the day. Imagine what would have happened to Queensland over the past six months if the LNP were in power: fewer healthcare workers, less funding for the health system and open borders.

Ms BATES: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. On relevance, can I ask you to bring the minister back to the long title of the bill?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, I have been following where you were going on this. If you could return to the long title of the bill, that would be great.

Mr BAILEY: Certainly. The Palaszczuk government will always support our healthcare workers, we will always support our health system and we will always support Queenslanders. This bill is part of that commitment, part of a consistent record of boosting resources and boosting our healthcare system—not cutting, not sacking and not selling. It is actually about supporting our healthcare system; it is part of 5½ years of reform under Labor. People know what they are getting with us. We keep our election promises. We are sincere about the commitments we make to the electorate. We do not get elected and then junk our promises soon after, like those opposite. We keep our commitments. This health bill is consistent with that. I am proud of a government that invests in our healthcare system. Queenslanders understand, particularly this year, how important it is that a government does exactly that.