




Speech By
Ros Bates

MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA

Record of Proceedings, 18 June 2020

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Rockhampton, Aged-Care Facility; Queensland Border Closure

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.44 pm): The Palaszczuk Labor government's treatment of a nurse who tested positive to coronavirus while at the same time working at a state government run aged-care home in North Rockhampton has been nothing short of appalling. This nurse has been vilified from pillar to post and the Deputy Premier—or, as he should be known, the 'king of cover-ups'—needs to come clean about what information was being backgrounded to the media or what he, his office and his department were briefing to the member for Keppel.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Pause the clock. I think that is unparliamentary. I ask you to withdraw.

Ms BATES: I withdraw. It seems like the member for Keppel was broadcasting information and backgrounding media about this case. She should apologise for the way she has spoken about the nurse—someone who lives in her own community in Rockhampton. I know that the Nurses Professional Association of Queensland has written to the Crime and Corruption Commission about the member for Keppel and the treatment of this nurse, and I have done the same.

It beggars belief that Labor wraps their arms around the nursing community whenever they can, but when it suits their own political purposes they throw nurses under the bus, and no case is clearer of that than what happened to this poor aged-care nurse who is in fact a Queensland government employee. As the *Australian* reported on 29 May—

... the NPAQ would refer Keppel Labor MP Brittany Lauga to the Privacy Commissioner and Crime and Corruption Commission after she disclosed to local media information that the nurse had given to Queensland Health. When asked about the complaint, Ms Lauga said: "I better not say any more."

The minister needs to investigate how private information about this nurse was seemingly disclosed to the member for Keppel. Anything less will be yet another Labor cover-up.

While I am on my feet, I also want to speak about the border. As the *Australian* newspaper revealed today, the economic cost of keeping interstate borders closed is costing 173 Queensland jobs everyday—the highest in the nation. Nowhere is feeling that more than on the Gold Coast—a key tourism destination and a border community. Yet the only Labor member on the Gold Coast—the member for Gaven—has been missing in action. Further to that, it would be hard to believe that the member is actually the Assistant Minister for Tourism Industry Development. Her silence has been deafening.

When Gold Coasters were calling for economic leadership, the member for Gaven has been hiding from the media. She has been silenced by her Brisbane masters instead of standing up for her local community. History will remember that, when action was called for, the member for Gaven was conspicuous in her absence.

We will be reminding residents in the Gaven electorate that it is clear that the member for Gaven does not care about local jobs on the Gold Coast. The Gold Coast is a tourism town and it is time the member for Gaven got on board with that. The only way to build a stronger economy and create more local jobs in Gaven is to vote for the LNP candidate Kirsten Jackson on 31 October this year.