



Speech By  
**Ros Bates**


**MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA**

---

Record of Proceedings, 11 August 2020

## **MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

### **Coronavirus, Queensland Border Checks; Aged Care**

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.26 pm): In the last two weeks, Queenslanders have seen how the Palaszczuk Labor government cannot manage the borders and keep Queenslanders safe. Labor's border honour system clearly is not working and we have seen border breach after border breach, with a few reckless individuals exposing massive gaps in the Palaszczuk government's border defences risking a second wave like we have seen in Victoria. No-one wants to see that here in Queensland. It will put lives and livelihoods at risk.

The latest border breach involves two teenage girls who caught a train into Queensland, and it exposes another major flaw in Labor's border honour system. Once again, the Palaszczuk Labor government's border honour system has failed, and yet more and more people will try and breach Labor's weak border defences when they see how easy it is. The Premier liked to talk tough last week about closing border exemptions and loopholes, only for it to be revealed that the fake diplomat from Afghanistan who came into Queensland with COVID last week was able to dodge quarantine following an exemption that was approved by the Palaszczuk government. This of course was on top of the exemption that was previously provided to TV celebrity Dannii Minogue. On top of that, media reports today show that the Premier did not even raise the issue at national cabinet last week—probably out of embarrassment that it would expose another hole in Labor's border defences.

Whilst celebrities and fake diplomats get exemptions and get to jump the queue—dodging mandatory quarantine requirements for incoming travellers coming from COVID hotspots—everyone else is supposed to do the right thing. At the same time, a GP from the Tweed was reportedly refused entry into Queensland. This is someone who staffs the Palm Beach COVID fever clinic. As the media reported today, the doctor has been told to apply because no system to handle their entry has been established beforehand. It could take a week to get an answer to a written inquiry for exemption. This is yet another health bungle on the border that could put the lives of Gold Coast locals at risk. There needs to be some common sense applied, especially for essential workers such as doctors, nurses and paramedics. Surely a GP who runs a fever clinic is an essential worker in the middle of a global health pandemic.

All of this makes a mockery of the whole process and shows the inconsistencies in the approach of the Palaszczuk Labor government. GPs who run fever clinics in the southern Gold Coast have trouble getting into Queensland, yet teenage girls in Noosa and Logan can expose major flaws in the border bubble while exemptions are granted to fake diplomats and celebrities.

My office has also been contacted by another person who tried to do the right thing but exposed another flaw in Labor's border defences. A Queenslanders staying in Victoria wanted to come home and decided to apply for the appropriate passes to drive from Victoria through New South Wales and into Queensland.

He made the decision to leave Victoria on 5 August and got the relevant New South Wales and Queensland border passes that day. He left Victoria on 6 August and stayed overnight in New South Wales. He crossed the Queensland border last Friday, on 7 August, after driving from New South Wales with no issue. In fact, he was waved through despite having a Q for quarantine requirement on his border pass. When he proactively contacted the COVID-19 hotline he was told to isolate at home for two weeks. His wife informed my office—

I also rang COVID-19 on 13 42 68 around the same time and was told that he was fortunate to be waived through and it is up to border control if he would need to quarantine and that he should go straight home to self-isolate. I also informed the lady that I live in the house with my daughter and asked if we would need to self-isolate.

Last Friday night he received a knock on the door from police and he was then required to go into government arranged hotel accommodation and pay \$2,800. It is clear that the Palaszczuk government cannot manage the border with ongoing border breaches highlighting major flaws in the honour system.

While I am on my feet I want to raise another issue about aged care on the Gold Coast. There are issues with a HHS tender for the transfer of patients to residential aged-care services. Leading Age Services have written to the HHS and raised concerns about excessive fees levied by placement services that are charged to aged-care providers. Excessive fees charged by placement agencies reduce the resources that are available to deliver aged care. There is significant concern among aged-care providers on the Gold Coast about these excessive fees. Many providers may simply refuse to accept new residents under these arrangements, reducing the choice of services available to patients. After the trauma of the Earle Haven debacle last year, the last thing Gold Coast residents want to see is another aged-care debacle. I urge the HHS to work with local aged-care providers through this tender process.