




Speech By
Ros Bates

MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Queensland Border Closure, Exemptions

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.05 pm): When the Premier, Annastacia Palaszczuk, said that Queensland hospitals are for Queensland patients, it was one of the most un-Australian things I have ever heard. It will haunt her every day for the next 51 days right up until election day on 31 October. So much for, 'We're all in this together.' So much for the rhetoric about uniting and recovering.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Members, I appreciate there is well-wishing going on, but we do need to hear the member who is on her feet.

Ms BATES: It is an us-against-them mentality, and Queenslanders have seen right through it. The Premier's politicisation of the pandemic, particularly around interstate borders, has lacked compassion and shown that the true priorities of the Labor government are about getting re-elected—not protecting lives and livelihoods through a global pandemic. Queenslanders must be kept safe to protect lives and livelihoods; no-one disputes that. The LNP has always said that border controls are not 'set and forget' and we support strong action on borders because we cannot risk a second wave, but the same rules should apply to everyone. There should not be special treatment for those who own a superyacht, play or coach football, or if you are a Hollywood celebrity.

Queenslanders who have had to travel interstate for lifesaving surgery should be given exemptions to quarantine at home, particularly when it is recommended by medical advice from the likes of one of Australia's leading neurosurgeons, Dr Charlie Teo. Sadly, these exemption requests by ordinary Queenslanders have been refused, but there has been special treatment for the rich and famous. How can you justify telling a 39-year-old Queensland father who is dying of cancer that his four young kids from New South Wales cannot all come and see him at the same time and say goodbye because they live across the border, when special treatment is given to Melbourne AFL VIPs and Hollywood celebrities. It is heartless, it is cruel, and it lacks common decency. Sadly, that is just one of many examples of how people have been denied access to loved one's funerals, to see their dying relatives or to access lifesaving surgery.

The Premier needs to ensure the exemption system is applied consistently and there is compassion from Queenslanders who are recovering from life-saving surgery. Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk rolled out the red carpet for AFL players, officials and their families while everyday Australians with critical medical conditions have been ignored or rejected. It is time for common sense, consistency and compassion—not special deals for sporting stars and celebrities. It seems that under the Palaszczuk Labor government there is one rule for the rich and another for everyone else.

My heart goes out to people like Mark and his family, or Jane Brown on the Sunshine Coast, or Sarah, a Queensland living in Canberra who missed saying goodbye to her father who recently passed away after she was stuck in mandated government quarantine. Meanwhile, two builders from Melbourne were recently allowed to come to Queensland to build a boxing ring. The priorities of the Palaszczuk Labor government are all wrong—

(Time expired)