




Speech By
Hon. Dr Steven Miles
MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

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MOTION

Coronavirus

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (11.34 am): This government has done everything it can to prevent the spread of this new disease. We have convened the Queensland Disaster Management Committee to ensure a quick, coordinated and comprehensive response. We have screened more than 650 travellers. We have tested 458 more people across the state. We have ramped up testing, as I outlined earlier, by expanding it to private pathology collection sites. We have set up fever clinics at three of our biggest hospitals and they are ready to be set up at others.

We have developed comprehensive information packs for hotels, cleaners, transport operators and other stakeholders. We have shared our experience and learnings with our interstate colleagues to assist them with their efforts. We have led calls for more to be done by the federal government, including providing states with border force intel on travellers' whereabouts and contacts, but we cannot do all of this alone. This is an international issue and we need a strong national response, national leadership, from the Morrison government. We need the Prime Minister to acknowledge the gravity of this situation for Queensland. Instead, they have let Queenslanders down.

They drag their heels in providing us with traveller details and contact information. Then when they did provide it, most of the contacts were missing. After days of calling on the feds to provide data—including a formal letter in writing at their request—they sent 699 names, but 555 of them were missing contact details. We have asked for those contact details, but we are still waiting.

The World Health Organization has declared the new coronavirus outbreak a global health emergency of international concern. When is Scott Morrison going to stand up and show some leadership? Since we have been in this House this morning, 255 more cases have been confirmed around the world. Since I gave my update this morning, 65 more people have died. Queensland Health is working around the clock to get information to the public. They have sent 1,749 text messages to families of Queensland schoolchildren recently returned from China. 13HEALTH have fielded 828 calls about this outbreak day and night. They have completed 620 nurse assessments.

Our amazing Chief Health Officer is talking to her state and federal colleagues every single day. She has been liaising across government agencies including Transport and Main Roads, the Department of Housing and Public Works and the Queensland Police Service every day. Again, she has had to write to the Commonwealth Department of Health requesting data on all travellers and all Australian citizens who left China up to 14 days ago. We should not have to take time away from our health response to the outbreak to plead with the Morrison government to provide us with the information we need.

What has the opposition done to help with this huge effort? Have they contacted their federal colleagues on our behalf? No, they have not. Instead, it appears the opposition were fixated in question time on my Facebook page—and I welcome that. It is a very good source of information about the novel

coronavirus. Yesterday, I asked all members to share the health information through their communication channels, and I note that many have. The member for Noosa, for example, posted the health advice yesterday, and I welcome that. But do you know what, Madam Deputy Speaker? The Leader of the Opposition has posted on Facebook 26 times since this health emergency began—her poor followers. Do you know how many times she has shared the Queensland Health advice? Not once, not even since the briefing yesterday, attended by her office, when I asked all MPs to share the information. She did not go.

Ms Bates: I am pretty sure you were going to send the information to all MPs.

Dr MILES: The opposition spokesperson, who is interjecting now—

Ms Bates interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Pugh): Order! Member for Mudgeeraba, you are still on the speaking list. Your time will come. Your interjections are not being taken.

Dr MILES: The opposition spokesperson has posted on Facebook seven times since the briefing but has not bothered to share the health information. It is easy to find: it is on my Facebook page. Instead of posting glamour shots on Facebook, maybe they could share the health advice and help us get that message out. Once they have, maybe then they could pick up the phone to their mate in Canberra, 'Scotty from Marketing', and ask him to help them out, get this issue off their agenda, and support Queensland's effort to help our tourism and other industries through this.

(Time expired)