




Speech By
Hon. Dr Steven Miles

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

Record of Proceedings, 18 March 2020

**PUBLIC HEALTH AND OTHER LEGISLATION (PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY)
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (9.23 pm), in reply: I thank all members who have contributed to the debate tonight. Earlier I had a chance to speak in some detail about this important bill and to address the amendments proposed, especially those relevant to the health portfolio. At that stage I did outline to the House precisely why they were urgent and why we needed to pass them quickly tonight. They are indeed needed and urgent in order to allow us, via our Chief Health Officer, to implement important decisions that have been made by the national cabinet in an unprecedented regular meeting of the first ministers of the states and territories and of the Commonwealth, especially those decisions that relate to stopping mass gatherings and locking down aged-care facilities.

It is important that we clarify that we have the power to do those things. It is also important that we can ensure that the state can do those things without being exposed to a potentially limitless amount of compensation. That is the purpose of the health amendments in this bill. Other ministers have appropriately addressed why amendments to the legislation for which they are responsible should be passed and why they should be passed urgently. For that reason, I commend the bill to the House.