




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR CLAYFIELD

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MOTION

Coronavirus

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (11.40 am): Listening to the health minister talk about someone from marketing, a fellow who ran a petition page to change the name of the Lady Cilento hospital rather than doing the work he should be doing and making sure we have a health system that works, is like shipping coal to Newcastle. It is phenomenal that this minister, whose own office was allegedly tapping away on a keyboard to fill in a petition to spend \$500,000 to change the name of a hospital because of pure political ideology, would lecture anyone about their response to a health crisis. It is quite frankly unbelievable, unacceptable and paints this motion in the light that it is. This is clearly a political motion from a government that is clearly and desperately worried about its prospects over the next eight or nine months—as they should be, given their disgraceful record in this state over the last five years.

This is pure politics, and nothing demonstrated that more than seeing the Premier pop up on morning TV claiming that this government had not received information when in fact it had been offered to them at 4 pm the afternoon before. Two hours after the Premier pops up on morning TV, a letter goes from the Chief Health Officer to Canberra saying ‘please provide it’, but it was actually offered at 4 pm the afternoon before. That is a sign of a government truly on top of its brief! This is part of a government where there have been more than 22 multilateral meetings to share information, including frequent meetings with Communicable Diseases Network Australia, of which Queensland is the chair. They are chairing the meetings which spread the information, yet today we have this purely political motion in order to save their ineffective and failed government.

We have never seen this before. Under the Beattie and Bligh governments we did not see it with SARS and we did not see it with swine flu. They did not put their hands up and say, ‘Oh, woe is us!’ What we are seeing is a government so hopelessly inept at managing its finances that it cannot respond to the problems that inevitably the winds of world tourism and the interconnectedness of our economies around the world—as the Deputy Premier said in relation to our reliance on China—blow across our shores. They fail to acknowledge the \$76 million in funding provided in relation to tourism announced by the Prime Minister on 19 January. That money included: a \$20 million domestic marketing campaign; a \$25 million global marketing campaign; \$10 million for regional tourism events initiatives; \$9.5 million for international media and travel and trade hosting; \$6.5 million for an Australian Tourism Exchange event; and \$5 million to boost diplomatic relationships and stations overseas.

In total, \$76 million was provided in response to the bushfire disaster that occurred in New South Wales, but this money is available if this government is adept enough and nimble enough—I believe that the member for Cooper would be nimble enough and adept enough if she is quick off the mark, which I am sure she is—to leverage that money and say, ‘Let’s use this to respond to the coronavirus that has now come across our shores.’ That is not to mention the \$242 million the federal government provided last year in response to the monsoonal storm events that swept across North and Far North Queensland—fifty-fifty with the Queensland government—that was provided by the Prime Minister and

the federal coalition to ensure that people in the north had access to recovery resources so they can get on with rebuilding their lives, a process which is still underway. It was one of the fastest responses ever.

Now we have a government that is so broke it has no petrol left in the tank, a government that continually whinges and whines. 'We want to build a road, but the federal government is not paying for it.' 'We want to build a railway, but the federal government is not paying for it.' Before too much longer, the way they are going at the moment this government will be saying they want the federal government to pay for their re-election campaign. Here we are with a government \$91 billion in debt and no money in the bank. It is no wonder we have seen this atrocious political motion here today.