




Speech By
Adrian Tantari

MEMBER FOR HERVEY BAY

Record of Proceedings, 2 December 2021

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT

Hervey Bay, Coronavirus

 **Mr TANTARI** (Hervey Bay—ALP) (2.41 pm): I rise to give a shout-out to my community and region for facing up and staring down the great challenge that it has faced from a one-in-100-year pandemic. The Fraser Coast, and in particular the Hervey Bay community, has this year responded in droves to the call of the Chief Health Officer to remain vigilant by being vaccinated to keep our community safe. Some 92 per cent have received their first dose of the vaccine and 80 per cent are double vaccinated: that is very well done.

There is no greater example of collective community spirit than coming together to care for one another, to protect our most vulnerable and to work as one to shut out a virus that has, sadly, cost over five million people their lives worldwide. What the Palaszczuk Labor government has done to protect our community shows leadership. Leadership, with the sole focus on ensuring safety for all, is true leadership.

Sadly, last week the Fraser Coast Regional Council carried a motion to oppose the directive that was given by the Chief Health Officer to give our community a safe transitional path out of the pandemic. The motion that was carried showed the depth to which a few Labor government hating councillors will dive to bring disharmony and disruption to our safe community for their own personal gain. The councillors who drafted this motion have used the sick and the aged, the immunocompromised and our children under 12 as cannon fodder in pursuit of their own agenda when, especially at this time, they should have been showing leadership and backing in the health of our people, like other regional councils have done.

The motion passed by council has contributed to increasing the sickening level of abuse against those who are doing the right thing in supporting the health directive. Hardworking small businesses are copping it. Our frontline staff—the very people who are saving lives by simply doing their jobs to keep us safe and protect us from disease—are being abused. This is not acceptable.

For the information of councillors, your motion has further emboldened the extreme and incited abusive behaviour towards our health professionals and our small business owners, not to mention personal threats against MPs, their families and their staff. This is unacceptable behaviour. I say: stop inciting social and community unrest for your own political gain. The councillor who moved the motion was seen attending a rally in Hervey Bay—not in his division. It was put on Facebook that he was trying to remain anonymous; he was hiding in the shadows like a puppetmaster, creating unrest and hiding from public scrutiny for his harmful actions.

The Premier's and the Chief Health Officer's response to this challenge has been world class and they have kept us safe. That is why we are now able to enjoy mostly unrestricted activities and why our economy has bounced back stronger. To the vast majority of the people of the Hervey Bay

electorate: your community thanks you for seeing the importance of being vaccinated and for keeping our community safe and strong. To the Fraser Coast Regional Council I say: show the leadership you are elected for and stop dividing our—

(Time expired)