




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE

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MOTION

Coronavirus, Vaccination Mandate

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (4.20 pm): Every single sick or vulnerable Queenslanders needing health care deserves to know they can be as safe as possible from catching COVID when they place their trust in our hospitals, and our healthcare workers on the front line need to be safe so they can keep others safe doing that essential work. These are tough decisions, but making tough decisions in a crisis is what leadership is all about.

That is where the member for Broadwater and the member for Mudgeeraba absolutely collapse, because up until today they have not shown a scrap of leadership between the two of them. They have talked down our vaccination program every single step of the way. If the member for Nanango wants to talk about own goals, I remind her that she called for the borders to be opened 64 times—at least I suppose she stood for something, unlike the current Leader of the Opposition.

The member for Mudgeeraba talks about her time as a nurse. She should know that mandatory vaccination for healthcare workers is not new—hepatitis B, measles, mumps, rubella, whooping cough, chickenpox. Since 2016 Queensland Health has had mandatory vaccination requirements where necessary. Now, like every other state, the Palaszczuk government has added COVID-19 to that because the Commonwealth AHPPC recommends it and because it is the right thing to do, but the Leader of the Opposition and his health spokesperson could not bring themselves to stand up until today. They are all about freedom but they are silent on responsibility. They are big on ranting. They are failing on leadership.

Who are they protecting with their delays on backing in the advice? Is it LNP Senator Gerard Rennick, the Queensland LNP's new Craig Kelly? I had a look at his Facebook page today. There is a constant stream of false information and scare campaigns. He shamefully describes compulsory vaccination as the equivalent of the Tiananmen Square massacre. Shameful. The failure of LNP members to call out these conspiracy theories is dangerous. People in my community in northern Moreton Bay are falling into the conspiracy theory trap, yet there is a cone of silence from local LNP members at the state and federal level on vaccination. We are meant to be leaders in our communities. If every member here does not speak up strong, Queenslanders are at risk and they will die.

It is pure opportunism that stopped the LNP backing in mandatory vaccination up until this point. They are hoping to ride the wave of vaccine conspiracy theorists coming out of the uncertainty of the pandemic. They are empowering their fake union that is undermining the safety of healthcare workers, and 115,000 healthcare workers have died worldwide. When will the LNP be satisfied? When it comes to borders, when it comes to vaccination, when it comes to health, they do not listen to the science and they do not listen to the health advice. Who can forget the member for Broadwater calling our CHO a punch-drunk bureaucrat? Until they can stand up and condemn NPAQ's challenge and Gerard Rennick, the LNP are showing that they are not fit to lead their communities and they will never be fit to lead Queensland.