



Speech By  
**Andrew Powell**

**MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE**

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Record of Proceedings, 31 August 2021

## ADJOURNMENT

### Coronavirus, Queensland Border Restrictions

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (6.59 pm): It was wonderful to attend events in the community over the weekend such as the Wamuran State School circus carnival and the Woodford Historical Society 41st Villeneuve and Neurum reunion.

It is great that we have zero new cases of COVID and that as a result we are enjoying a freedom that others in this nation are not, but it has come at a very heavy cost. I have spoken on numerous occasions about the challenges and stress the small business owners of Glass House have been experiencing, and I have shared the devastation felt by our local wedding venues in having to tell brides and grooms their special day cannot proceed as planned. I am pleased the media is now starting to ask questions about mental health and report on the wellbeing of Queenslanders. Announcing COVID cases and deaths is one thing; I fear the number of deaths related to lockdowns, bankruptcies, isolation and uncertainty is so much higher. As reported in today's *Courier-Mail* there is—

Deep distress over the impact of lockdowns ... with 30 per cent of Queenslanders revealing the emotional wellbeing of themselves or their families has suffered in the past three months.

Most Queenslanders worry less about catching COVID-19 than losing their jobs, with business closures and job losses topping the list of concerns for 58 per cent of people as the financial costs of lockdown hits home.

Mental health is second biggest concern—just over half of Queenslanders know someone whose mental health has suffered during the pandemic.

The recent decision by the Premier and government to now lock Queenslanders out from returning to Queensland is adding to the anguish. Essential workers like Steven Cross are locked out of the state. Steven wrote the following to me—

I am working on a Project that is crucial to the Qld-NSW Electricity State interconnector and I am caught up in the Queensland border restrictions on a constant basis. My Company has applied for exemptions without success and I have also applied personally for an Agriculture Border Pass as I am a Primary Producer all without success. I have received no feedback from any of the applications, not even to advise that they had received the application. I have spoken to multiple people in different Government Departments including Qld Health and I have received numerous comments without anyone able to give me concrete answers as to how the system works.

Now we have the inconsistency of allowing the NRL entourage in and keeping locals like Steven out. Lloyd and Cheryl Cavanaugh wrote to me to express their disgust at the recent granting of exemptions to enter Queensland for sports teams. They said—

This is truly sickening when ordinary Queenslanders are unable to return from interstate because of a supposed shortage of quarantine facilities, but all the sports teams and various hangers-on seem to have no problem doing so.

This rubbish has gone far enough and it's high time this government full of seat warmers was made aware of how many people in this state are feeling.

Premier, your internal polling has got this one wrong. When Queenslanders are locked out of their own state you have gone too far. If there is room for sporting families, there is room for Queensland families.