




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

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MOTION

Bundaberg, Health Services

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (6.00 pm): It is interesting when those opposite come in here claiming to care about our hospital and health systems. They claim to care about the doctors and nurses who work in our hospital and health services across Queensland. In her contribution the member for Mudgeeraba made a compassionate plea to the nurses in Bundaberg, 'Please trust me. Trust the LNP.' It is complete tokenism and duplicity. It is as though 40 per cent of those on the frontbench opposite have completely forgotten how they sat around that cabinet table and sacked 4,400 health workers—including 1,800 nurses and doctors—across the state. 'Oh, no, that didn't happen.' Actually, that did happen. Those opposite sacked 4,400 health workers, so it is completely disingenuous, it is tokenism, to come in here and pretend to be the saviours of hospital and health workers and pretend to care, when those opposite were responsible for sacking thousands of health workers across our state.

It is as if they borrowed Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones' memory zapper from *Men in Black*—'zap' and it's gone—the Neuralyzer. I am sure they have borrowed that. Maybe it is available in the library. They completely now forget that they sacked those nurses. All of that bad blood, all of those jobs, all of those memories—gone! Erased! Those opposite are like, 'Yeah, it's all good. We don't remember it, so it didn't happen.' But it did, and those nurses will never forget—

Mr Millar interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Member for Gregory, you can leave the chamber for one hour. You were under a warning.

Whereupon the honourable member for Gregory withdrew from the chamber at 6.02 pm.

Ms LAUGA: Those doctors, nurses and health workers will never forget what those opposite did to them. The Palaszczuk government has made record investments in Queensland's health system, a fact that those opposite completely ignore time and time again, and Wide Bay is no exception. We on this side of the parliament are committed to delivering free world-class health care to all Queenslanders no matter where they live. That is why we are increasing funding to the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service to ensure that we can continue to provide this care to their community.

A key part of the Palaszczuk government's commitment to ensuring that Queenslanders continue to receive the best health care possible is supporting an additional 9,475 frontline health workers over the next four years across the state. This includes an additional 5,800 nurses, 1,500 new doctors and an extra 475 paramedics. Since coming to office in 2015 we have provided consistent year-on-year increases to health funding in not only the Wide Bay region with improved services, more frontline staff and ongoing capital investment but we are doing exactly the same in the Central Queensland region too. In fact, the Palaszczuk government has increased funding for the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service by \$266.6 million since 2015.

Dr Rowan interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Moggill, you are warned.

Ms LAUGA: Those opposite are not talking about the increase in \$266 million worth of funding. That is a massive 58 per cent increase on the funding provided by the previous LNP government. Not only did they sack nurses, doctors and healthcare workers but since we came to government we had to replace those doctors, nurses and healthcare workers. We have also increased funding to our hospital and health services. Our investments have seen approximately 53 new beds added to the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service's capacity, and that means better care for the people who need it most.

Unlike the LNP, we do not talk down our hardworking healthcare heroes: we talk them up. We make sure they have the resources they need to keep doing their vital work. Instead of sacking workers, we have invested in our frontline health workers with 98 additional doctors, 311 additional nurses, 161 additional allied health professionals, and 583 additional FTEs across the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service. What a great job they are doing! Despite facing some of the most challenging conditions in generations, our dedicated health workforce continues to provide health care of the highest quality. In fact, the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service has consistently met its elective surgery wait targets for the last seven years, which is a ringing endorsement of the service.

Labor will build a new hospital in Bundaberg, and I have no doubt it will be to the high standard that the people of Bundaberg deserve. I congratulate the member for Bundaberg on his hard work and advocacy to improve local hospital and health services in Bundaberg. He is a great local member, and I am constantly crossing paths with him in the corridors while he is wearing the carpet thin in front of the ministerial offices in this place because he is determined to stand up for Bundaberg. I support the amendment.