



Speech By  
**Cynthia Lui**


**MEMBER FOR COOK**

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## **PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT**

### **Coronavirus, Cook Electorate**

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (2.39 pm): It is two years on and we are still talking about COVID. In comparing where we have been and how far we have come, there is no doubt we are in a much better position moving forward with the global pandemic. I want to speak specifically to my communities in Cape York and Torres Strait.

I acknowledge that the global pandemic has not been easy on anyone. The initial onset of COVID-19 brought about a lot of uncertainty. Everyone I spoke with expressed the need for community safety. Everyone, including myself, wanted some sort of guarantee and reassurance that in the midst of the unknown the safety and wellbeing of individuals, family and community would be upheld to the highest regard.

My electorate is one of the three largest electorates in Queensland. All of my communities are scattered throughout the vast regions of FNQ. Cape York and the Torres Strait fall into the category of being the most vulnerable in the Cook electorate. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people suffer the poorest health outcomes, and a potential outbreak in any one of those communities would be devastating. Since the initial onset of COVID-19 in March 2020, the Palaszczuk government has implemented a suite of different measures to keep communities safe.

I want to remind everyone that in March 2020 we had no solution to help us move forward with this pandemic. You will remember the lockdowns. It was not easy, but communities pulled together and we made it work. Taking kids out of schools again was not easy on our kids and families, but we pulled together as a community and we made it work. Quarantining and COVID tests, yes, they were inconveniences, but we pulled together and we made it work. All of these measures kept communities safe, as we have not had one positive COVID case in Cape York or the Torres Strait.

We are at the next phase in this COVID pandemic: the vaccination phase. I have every belief that we can pull together again and make this work. Our local community is lagging behind the state average when it comes to vaccination rates, but it does not have to be that way. The Palaszczuk government is making the vaccine available to ensure we protect ourselves, our family and our community. Next week there will be pop-up clinics operating in Cooktown, Mapoon, Wujal Wujal, Napranum and Laura, amongst the many other vaccination clinics we have held throughout the Cook electorate.

I am calling on all of my communities. If you do not have your jab, now is the time to do so. We need to be ready when the virus comes to Queensland. Getting the COVID vaccination is the most important thing you can do for yourself, your family and your community.