



Speech By  
**Daniel Purdie**


**MEMBER FOR NINDERRY**

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Record of Proceedings, 13 October 2021

**MOTION**

**Coronavirus, Palaszczuk Labor Government Modelling**

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (5.33 pm): For months Queenslanders have been told that, unless you are a footballer or their Instagram-famous wife or girlfriend, you will just have to accept that lockdowns and lockouts are a way of life. You will have to accept that your family will be torn apart by the Palaszczuk government's edict because it is for our own good. You will have to accept that the Palaszczuk government is willing to let your business wither on the vine because it is for our own good. Even if you can accept that torn-apart families and torn-up livelihoods was the necessary plan A to ensure our health system could cope while Queenslanders were not vaccinated, why is there no plan B for when we are? Is it because this government can no longer paper over a failing health system with its rampings, botched surgeries and never-ending list of crises?

With the Premier's gold-plated spin team rolling out a comprehensive fear campaign, it is no wonder our vaccination rate remains the second lowest in the country, although low vaccination rates do provide a convenient excuse for this government to avoid developing a COVID recovery plan. They were elected to lead, and abrogating their responsibility to public servants is not leadership. Making life simple for themselves by indefinitely keeping the borders shut is not leadership. Queenslanders now want to choose hope over fear. They want answers. They want clarity. They want accountability, common sense and compassion. They have become more sick of politics than they have from COVID. They want to know when they can see their families, when they can return home and when they can start planning for their future. That is why I too am standing up today on behalf of my constituents and the thousands of small and family businesses in my electorate and asking the Premier to release the modelling that is being used to determine our path back to normality.

This is about a deal between the government and the people of Queensland. When they agreed to the national plan they told Queenslanders, 'If you get vaccinated we'll bring you out of the COVID darkness.' Despite all the mixed messaging, Queenslanders are doing the right thing and getting vaccinated, with 52.7 per cent of all Queenslanders now fully vaccinated and 70.2 per cent having received their first dose. They recognise the importance of being vaccinated as a health measure and as a path to regain the freedoms this government has taken from them. Queenslanders are now growing increasingly frustrated that the Premier and her government are trying to renege on their side of that deal.

Queenslanders want certainty around the date. Suggestions of a vague date in five to six weeks give no hope to Queenslanders. Queenslanders want certainty about what the various stages of restrictions will look like. Many small businesses in my electorate will not make it to Christmas, let alone next year, if the government does not provide some clarity now. The crippling effect of mixed messaging and ad hoc lockdowns on small and family businesses, particularly in the tourism industry, cannot be underestimated. Statistics from Tourism Research Australia have highlighted the crippling toll of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has cost the Queensland tourism industry almost \$20 billion. The same stats also reveal that around 10,000 Queensland tourism businesses will not survive the pandemic. The

Queensland Tourism Industry Council CEO commented that it would be a long road to recovery. He said, 'We are in a very deep hole and it will take a long time to recover.' It is no surprise to learn that business owners are also struggling emotionally and mentally as well as financially.

Recently the Sunshine Coast Council surveyed 120 businesses in the region and found that 30 per cent have little interest or pleasure in doing things, and nearly 50 per cent felt their business was financially vulnerable as a result of the pandemic. I commend the Caloundra Chamber of Commerce for its initiative in undertaking this research in response to the concerns raised by many of its members. Similarly, in my own local chamber Coolumb Business and Tourism is not just sitting on its hands waiting while its membership base suffers. They have taken matters into their own hands and are looking for opportunities through innovative local campaigns. Their motivation and leadership is in stark contrast to what we have seen from the Palaszczuk Labor government, which continues to hold the health advice they claim is driving their decision-making process—the same health advice that prioritises celebrities and footballers over Queenslanders.

I said it before: Queenslanders want answers. They want clarity. They want accountability, common sense and compassion. They also want leadership, a plan and hope for their future. I support the motion.