



Speech By  
**David Crisafulli**


**MEMBER FOR BROADWATER**

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Record of Proceedings, 30 November 2021

**MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance**

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): After all the heartache and uncertainty of the last 18 months, today was an opportunity for some contrition: for the leader of this state to understand what those Queenslanders stuck on the other side of the border, those Queenslanders who have been unable to reunite with loved ones and those Queenslanders who have seen mixed messages have been feeling and say sorry in the same way that two ministers in her cabinet were able to do. Those ministers were big enough people to stand up and reflect on what happens when decisions are made poorly and not communicated well. On two occasions the Premier was given that opportunity and was not able to even apologise for the heartache that has been caused by asking Queenslanders to foot the bill for a decision that runs contrary to one that she took 18 months before.

She doubled down when she said that another level of government wanted to give some of its citizens COVID for Christmas. What a ridiculous statement from the leader of the state. What an unbecoming statement from somebody who is in charge of a state at a time when people are looking for leadership. In its third term this government is so smug it dismissed comments from a dozen women in the Public Service about claims of sexual harassment and said that somehow the Premier had not seen those comments made. That is either being very dismissive or not being across your brief; either way it is not the trait of a good leader.

Then we had the defence of the savage cuts to the front line by the great showman who is the Treasurer, who with bluster and bravado made all sorts of crazy allegations, who justified the cuts on the basis that a former government who he spends his entire time berating did the same thing so that was then the justification for it. Then he said it was not a cut; it was an efficiency dividend. What a salesman pitch that is.

An efficiency dividend will not buy you more beds, an efficiency dividend will not employ more nurses and an efficiency dividend will not fix the Queensland Health crisis. An efficiency dividend is known by another name when you are a frontline staff member. An efficiency dividend is known by another name when you are a patient waiting at the end of a phone for an ambulance that will not turn up. It is known as a cut. We will raise this on behalf of every Queenslanders who, as the shadow health spokesperson will always say, picks up the phone because their child is having an asthma attack, when dad is having a heart attack or when grandma has fallen with a broken hip and is laying in pain for many hours. Does anyone think that an ambulance officer who signed up to be a paramedic wants to sit at the end of a ramp? Of course they do not. They want to help someone in their hour of need. That is why they signed up. Because of the actions of this government they feel powerless to act.

There has been a slide in Queensland Health. It is not because of coronavirus. There has been a slide over the last seven years. This efficiency dividend over the last three years has magnified these cuts to a whole new level. It sees ambulance ramping at over 40 per cent across the state. It was 15 per

cent when this government came to office. In some hospitals it is two in three. It is nearly 66 per cent in some south-east hospitals. Two in three ambulances that turn up wait longer than recommended and that means problems at both ends of that ramp.

When it comes to elective surgery, right now nearly one in 10 surgeries are not completed within the clinically recommended time in Queensland. Right now more than 57,000 people are waiting for elective surgery. That is an increase of 25,000 since the government took office. In relation to specialist outpatient appointments—the waiting list to get onto the waiting list—there are 245,000 people on the waiting list. That is one in 20 Queenslanders. As the member for Glass House clearly outlined, most concerning is that has increased seven per cent in the last quarter. That is a system in crisis.

We have put forward our positive suggestions. They have come from town halls where we have listened to honest Queenslanders. At every one of those there has been a staff member of Queensland Health, either past or present, who were there to tell their story and give their suggestions. The government berates anyone who dares question a system that is in crisis. It is not the fault of the doctors, the nurses or the paramedics. It is the fault of a minister who is not over her brief and a government that is more concerned with how things look than how they are.

There are now two hospital surgery reviews underway. From what I can see from the government's actions, I am not sure they want to get to the bottom of the problems. I am not sure they are looking for what has culturally gone wrong. I am not sure they are looking to find if there is a 'Dr Death' operating in a Queensland hospital. They are looking to run a protection racket for a minister who, quite frankly, is not up to the job. In Caboolture the minister was forced to expand the review for two weeks when it was revealed that patients were not even interviewed. Patients who tried to be interviewed were not even given the opportunity. When the report was handed down we saw the most disgraceful statement which said that their horror stories that had changed their lives did not form part of the review, it ran in parallel.

In Mackay the minister did not even know a review had been undertaken. She did not know about the loss of accreditation. The opposition had to reveal that in a 48-hour period two people died in clinical incidents. One had a stent inserted on the wrong side of their body.

**Mrs Gilbert:** You traumatised those nurses. You should apologise to them.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Finally we hear the member for Mackay, the assistant health minister, say something about the Queensland Health crisis in her backyard. Right now I can only see the top of the member's head because the member has ducked a little bit. This is the first time I have heard a comment from the member for Mackay. What the member for Mackay could do right now is stand up and demand a voice because those patients are looking for someone with a bit of ticker. They are not looking for a nodding donkey, somebody to run excuses. They are looking for somebody to stand up in Mackay and have a crack. They are running out of patience with the member for Mackay because they are seeing a lot of nodding heads, not a lot of leadership. Right now that hospital is in crisis and it needs the member to stand up—not to make a snide remark. She is yet to make a comment about Mackay hospital in here.

As the year draws to a close, I seek to draw to the attention of the House not only the crisis in Queensland Health but also the infrastructure crisis where the maintenance backlog is now over \$6 billion, where the budget blowouts of an individual minister now tallies over \$300 million for Gold Coast Light Rail, \$600 million for the Coomera Connector and over \$2 billion for Cross River Rail despite it being hidden in multiple buckets.

I draw to the attention of the House education, where our NAPLAN results sadly are slipping and where Queensland is in a skills crisis with 13,000 fewer apprenticeships than the government promised to deliver. I draw the attention of the House to crime, where juvenile crime is out of control, where a brave security guard just doing his job can be rammed, where a mum taking her daughter for an ice-cream can have a car allegedly run through a light and cause great trauma to that family. We will continue to fight for a system that is broken and demand that breach of bail becomes a criminal offence for young thugs.

There is a construction industry crisis in which the QBCC is the very definition of a government organisation void of leadership, with staff leaving, undue influence of the board, and complaints from home owners and small business owners. On the environment, which the government claims to be the great defender of, the Auditor-General has shown that they do not have a plan to achieve renewable energy targets. Greenhouse gas emissions are now higher than when the government came to office and it will take them a mere 1,000 years to achieve their own target for protected areas.

As 2021 draws to a close Queenslanders are asking: have we been here before? This is a third-term government that promised one thing about managing finances before an election and broke that promise after. We have a health system that was described as a basket case and that has continued to get worse in the final term. There have been infrastructure blowouts and a crime crisis, and we all recall the decaying corpse of the Bligh government. This time, no scare campaign, no electoral gerrymander, no muck racking and no failure to say sorry will save what is an embarrassing third-term Labor government.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Before I call the next member, member for Broadwater, I ask you to withdraw some unparliamentary language that you used in relation to another member in this place.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I withdraw.