




Speech By
Julianne Gilbert

MEMBER FOR MACKAY

Record of Proceedings, 1 September 2021

MOTION

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Ipsos Polling Data; Order to Table Documents

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (5.25 pm): I rise to oppose the motion. It just beggars belief that those opposite in these unprecedented times continue to take issue with taking the advice from health experts and asking Queenslanders to act upon it. Let us be clear: it is Queenslanders who have done the hard work to ensure that our state, for the most part, has handled the threat of COVID-19 and the devastation that it causes. The fact that Queensland is at the stage that we are now and enjoying the ability to go out safely, to see our neighbours and our friends, to visit our family and to enjoy the best that our state has to offer is all down to Queenslanders. That is right: it is Queenslanders all following the health advice. Some try to pretend that it is all down to good luck, but it is not. It is down to our great people.

In March 2020 it was unimaginable that we would be doing the things that we do now that we consider part of everyday life—the routines that we have, wearing masks, social distancing and using our check-in apps. We never thought that this type of behaviour would become the norm, yet as we manage this pandemic we have been reminded that Queensland is a tight-knit community. From the cape down to Coolangatta, all levels of government have asked Queenslanders to do things that they have never done before. We know that by following the health advice we have been able to save lives.

Governments have a responsibility to effectively communicate with Queenslanders—all Queenslanders—because we are in this together. Each and every Queenslander has a role to play when it comes to following health advice and the only way that we are able to do this is if they have access to clear and concise messaging. All governments around the country have engaged in conducting research to ensure that they are communicating effectively. We have seen that in both Victoria and New South Wales. When they have had prolonged lockdowns and outbreaks of COVID it has been absolutely crucial that their messaging is right and that they are communicating with everyone—all groups, minority groups, new Australians—and we have seen the disasters that have happened when some people do not understand what is going on. We need to have this clear messaging and it needs to be for everyone. It is our responsibility that we are talking to Queenslanders in a meaningful way.

I will tell members why it is of utmost importance: in regional Queensland we have to contend with a hopelessly inept and downright dangerous misinformation source in our nation's capital, and that is the federal member for Dawson. He says that masks do not work and lockdowns do not work. He says that we have to accept that people will die from COVID. I am not prepared to give up anyone from my community to COVID. All of their lives matter. Today New South Wales hit the 100 mark in terms of deaths, and that is very sad. Surely then the member for Dawson has a list of 100 people whom he is prepared to give up, but I am not prepared to give up anyone. The federal member for Dawson is downright dangerous and I am distraught that I have to spend time refuting the myths and the conspiracies in my community of Mackay.

Those opposite want to throw stones; to come in here and talk about how governments should not effectively communicate the health advice that saves lives. How about they start within their own tent first. The member for Whitsunday was happy to stand beside her good friend, the member for Dawson, for a photo-op just three days after his anti health advice speech in the national parliament. Earlier this afternoon she heckled the health minister when the minister was talking about the health risks associated with COVID and then accused the Premier of scaremongering when she was talking about the young families and the children who have been in hospital. She needs to tell that to those families with children in hospital and to the family of the 12-month-old baby.

(Time expired)