




Speech By
Lachlan Millar

MEMBER FOR GREGORY

Record of Proceedings, 14 September 2021

VOLUNTARY ASSISTED DYING BILL

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (4.36 pm): I wholeheartedly support the amendment moved by the member for Traeger on behalf of the Katter party. One of the biggest issues we have in rural and remote Queensland is the lack of palliative care. I thank the member for Southport and deputy chair of the Health and Environment Committee for raising an issue when we went out to Boulia only a couple of months ago. A well-known Indigenous family in Boulia had just lost their sister. She had been at Mount Isa Hospital and was not receiving adequate care for pain relief, so she booked a ticket on a bus from Mount Isa all the way to Toowoomba to try to get the pain relief she needed.

This lady was on that bus for over 20 hours. On arrival in Toowoomba, she was in such a bad state that the bus driver had to call an ambulance to get her to Toowoomba Hospital. She received the best care from Toowoomba Hospital, and I thank Toowoomba Hospital for the care they gave to this lady. I have known her family for a long time. She was able to get back to her home, because she was terminal, by Angel Flight. Thank God for the people at Angel Flight who provide those services. She was flown back to Mount Isa. Her sister picked her up to bring her down to Boulia. As the sister was on the phone to the palliative care specialist, the lady passed away. As I was speaking to this family, who were distraught, the lady's body lay in the council morgue. She had not even been buried. That is how raw that was.

We do not have adequate palliative care in rural and remote Queensland. People are missing out on their fair share of care. People in rural and remote Queensland need end-of-life palliative care assistance. I am extremely passionate about this. As the member for Traeger said and as the member for Warrego and other members on this side of the House who represent rural and remote populations will say, we do not have the palliative care that people receive in Brisbane. Good luck to people in Brisbane for having that palliative care—I do not deny them that—but there needs to be the same sort of service for regional Queensland. I ask members to support the member for Traeger's amendment. Let's put palliative care first and foremost. That is what we need to do.