




Speech By
Lance McCallum

MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA

Record of Proceedings, 1 September 2021

PUBLIC HEALTH AND OTHER LEGISLATION (FURTHER EXTENSION OF EXPIRING PROVISIONS) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (6.15 pm): I rise in support of the Public Health and Other Legislation (Further Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill 2021, which will continue to protect the health, safety and welfare of all Queenslanders. This bill will help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in the community, supporting Queensland businesses and continuing our safe and strong economic recovery. Queenslanders are doing an outstanding job in responding to the pandemic.

Today we had no new local cases and just 23 active COVID cases across the entire state. Over the border in New South Wales today they had 1,116 new local cases and four deaths, despite being in lockdown for over 12 weeks now. We send the people of New South Wales our very best wishes as they battle with this deadly delta outbreak.

In contrast, here in Queensland our economy remains open and our communities are enjoying the welcome return of sport, events, school awards and celebrations. Why? It is because of the leadership of the Premier and a government who listens to the expert health advice and acts accordingly.

In our local community of Bundamba this means the Western Spirit, Ripley Valley, Ipswich Knights and Western Pride football clubs can return to their playing fields for training and fixtures. It means our Church Street Kindergarten and Preschool can resume fundraising efforts, the Ipswich Historical Society can host a family fun day and the African Youth Support Council can plan the opening of its new youth support centre at Redbank Plains after having to cancel the last planned opening due to the impact of COVID. It also means Bellbird Park State Secondary College can celebrate the success of its students from years 7 to 11.

None of this would have been possible without our ongoing safe and strong recovery, guided by the very best expert advice provided by our Chief Health Officer, Dr Jeannette Young. Of course, it would also not have been possible without an increasing number of Queenslanders coming forward to get vaccinated. In Bundamba that means visiting your GP or registering to get vaccinated at Foote's Pharmacy at Redbank Plains or one of the three participating pharmacies nearby in Springfield.

Our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 12 years and over can also get vaccinated at the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health clinic at Goodna and the Kambu Health clinic at Booval. Nationally, the vaccination rate for First Nations people is well below that of non-Indigenous people, and I am encouraging everyone to make the choice to protect themselves and their mob.

I am very proud to say that the Palaszczuk government continues to grow our network of COVID-19 vaccination hubs, and that includes opening a new facility at the former Harvey Norman showroom in the Ipswich CBD, accessible from the Nicholas Street mall. Our mass vaccination centre at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre is now administering 3,000 doses a day, and soon new facilities will open at the Brisbane Entertainment Centre at Boondall and at the Logan Entertainment Centre.

Vaccination remains our first line of defence, and Queensland is fast approaching 1.5 million total doses across the state. The sustained growth of new cases and the spread of highly transmissible COVID variants like the dangerous delta strain continue to present significant risks to Queensland and the rest of Australia.

The public health emergency requires a significant response from our health system and support from departments right across our government. Unless they are extended these emergency amendments will expire 30 September 2021—this month. No-one can seriously say that this pandemic will be over by the end of this month. The delta variant is taking a tragic and deadly toll over our border in New South Wales with more than 1,000 local cases per day. By working together we are continuing to keep Queensland safe, and we need to keep doing so now more than ever. We have done too well, worked too hard and come too far in this pandemic to falter so close to the end. That is why this bill is so important to our continuing success in Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.