




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

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MOTION

Coronavirus, Palaszczuk Labor Government Modelling

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (5.44 pm): Anxiety, fear, dread and hopelessness—every day, my constituents are confronted with these emotions because this state Labor government refuses to release a pathway out of the pandemic. Local businesses have fared no better. Had the Premier actually done her job and cared about my community enough to genuinely speak with the border businesses when she snuck down to Coolangatta for a little photo-op, she would know that we cannot go on without hope.

My community have shouldered the burden of border closures for the rest of Queensland for almost two years. They have done this despite the government providing no plan and no hope for a way out, and there has been no real relief for my community. While we struggle on the border, the Premier stages a photo-op to give the illusion that she cares. Meanwhile, this government have sacrificed us with their border policies. They have failed us by letting our cries for support and for a plan fall on deaf ears. My constituents deserve a government that actually cares for all Queenslanders. Instead, what we have is a government willing to sacrifice the Queensland border community. All my community wants is for the state government to do their job and commit to a pathway out of the pandemic.

Today in parliament we heard the Premier say that the pathway out is to not have a pathway in. Everyone here in this chamber knows that we need to have a plan to live with COVID. We cannot keep delta out forever, so what is the state government's plan for reopening the Queensland economy as vaccination rates improve? All of these mixed messages are causing chaos and confusion. We have no target to work towards, no certainty. My border community is living minute by minute, pay cheque by pay cheque, press conference by press conference, and it is not good enough. Queenslanders deserve to know what the Premier's plan is for the reopening of the Queensland economy. We already know that our ticket to freedom is vaccinations, but this state Labor government has failed to commit to a roadmap or a national plan.

To help the government boost their vaccination numbers, I spent months advocating for Currumbin constituents and calling for local mass vaccination hubs on the southern Gold Coast, calling for pop-up vaccination clinics. After the Broadbeach vaccination hub was announced on 16 July, my office was inundated with calls from local residents who were unable to get vaccinated or get an appointment. It took more than three months for this government to take me up on my offer and help local Currumbin constituents do their part. If the border is our front line, why did it take so long for this state Labor government to establish pop-up vaccination clinics?

We are all doing our part getting vaccinated, but this government has released no plan for the reopening of the Queensland economy. New South Wales has a plan. Victoria has a plan. What is Queensland's plan? What will the Premier do when we hit the 80 per cent vaccination rate? What will

the Premier do when we hit the 90 per cent vaccination rate? The modelling has been done but the Premier will not release it. Why won't the Premier let us know? Why won't the Premier let Queenslanders know?

I hear from my constituents every day about the very real effects this chaos and confusion is having and it is heart-breaking. Just today I had an email from Naomi about her home in the Currumbin Valley. She, her husband and their two young kids aged only three and four are currently homeless. She wrote—

We are homeless, living from our caravan, with two young boys and my husband unable to look for work until we're in Queensland. We're paying a mortgage—

on their Queensland home. She continued—

We feel like we're being treated as second class citizens and like untrustworthy children. We pose no threat and are fully vaccinated and are willing to do whatever is required of us to drive across the border and home quarantine.

...

Please help us, we are really struggling having no home, no second income and no certainty around our immediate future. We are desperate and feel like prisoners in our own country.

Another constituent is just trying to get home to their Coolangatta unit. This is a constituent who has been told they must fly into the Gold Coast airport to get to their unit, which is a mere five minutes away from where they are in Tweed Heads.

We cannot go on like this. My community must have a plan. The Premier must show some compassion. Now is the time to act. Provide local border businesses, families and residents with hope. Premier, do your job and commit to a pathway out of the pandemic to alleviate the anxiety, the fear and the dread that my constituents face on a daily basis. Release the modelling and release the plan.