



Speech By  
**Laura Gerber**


**MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN**

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Record of Proceedings, 18 November 2021

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT**

**Coronavirus, Queensland Border**

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (2.31 pm): The Palaszczuk Labor government must step up and provide some leadership to our border community. They must release the special arrangements that their own border re-opening strategy has promised to our community. We are not asking for a lot: we are simply asking for this government to do their job and release the plan for the border community, because every day that goes by is another constituent, another business that is suffering under the chaos and confusion—constituents like Paul from Currumbin Waters.

Paul is a fly-in fly-out worker, and he arrived home on Sunday. On Tuesday Paul crossed the border into the non-restricted zone of Tweed Heads to obtain a part he could not reasonably obtain in Queensland. He crossed that border into the non-restricted border zone for an essential purpose, which is defined under the border zone restriction as 'obtaining goods that cannot reasonably be obtained in Queensland'. Without realising it, Paul used his entry pass to try to come back to his home in Currumbin Waters. He was refused entry. He subsequently applied for the correct border pass, but again he was refused entry. He was facing the prospect of being locked out until 17 December, like so many other stranded Queenslanders in the Murwillumbah showgrounds. After my office contacted the health minister's department, the Premier's exemption unit allowed him to drive the 14 kilometres home but issued him with a direction to quarantine. Paul is fully vaccinated, and had he not made the technical error of using the wrong pass I have no doubt that he would have been able to come back home with no problem at all.

These are the challenges, the chaos and the confusion my constituents face every day. I am hopeful that the minister will be able to sort this drama out for my constituents. But ultimately, had the government done its job and released the special plan for the border community, as is promised in the border re-opening strategy, then Paul would not be in this situation.

Just this morning the Premier spoke about the fast-approaching date for the border re-opening. We know that this date is fast approaching, but what we do not have is a plan for our border community. We deserve to know when normal activities can resume, including community sport and free travel, and whether locals who need to cross the border daily will be required to show a negative COVID-19 test every 72 hours. The prospect of this, along with the substantive cost—upwards of \$150—is causing my community so much stress. We know the Premier did not pay for her own test when she went to Tokyo. Why? Because it was for work. My constituents need to cross the border every day for work also, and they should not be required to pay for the \$150 test either. Release the plan for the border community. The state government must step up and do this. The border needs to be exempt from these—

*(Time expired)*