




Speech By
Laura Gerber

MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

Record of Proceedings, 30 November 2021

ADJOURNMENT

Currumbin Electorate, Queensland Border

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (7.06 pm): Currumbin constituents have had a gutful! The Queensland state government has all but forgotten about our—

Mr STEWART: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mrs GERBER: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! Pause the clock.

Mrs GERBER: I withdraw. They have had enough—

Mr STEWART: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I believe that the member on her feet used unparliamentary language and I ask her to withdraw.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will hear the point of order in silence, thanks. The member has withdrawn. I would ask you to avoid using unparliamentary language.

Mrs GERBER: This week is the last week this Queensland parliament will sit for the year and, true to form, this government still has not released the promised plan for our border community. Queensland's 80 per cent vaccination target is looming and we need the plan for our border community to be released so that we can have a bit of certainty and a bit of hope for Christmas. Enough is enough. I have had an overwhelming response to my community petition calling on the Queensland Labor government to, one, release the plan for the border community; two, exempt border locals from the 72-hour testing requirement; and, three, reinstate our previous safe border bubble so that people can travel for community sport, so that they can travel to support our struggling Coolangatta businesses. I have 1,311 signatures in seven days on this petition, and that number is growing daily. I table a copy of that for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Nonconforming petition regarding border communities [2026](#).

The people who signed this petition also shared with me their stories, and they are heart-rending. I wonder what the Premier would say to Mandy from Coolangatta, a small business owner. She signed the petition and said—

... every day is stressful and a struggle! Not knowing if staff will show up or more so if they are allowed to. How many guests will be cancelling today because of the unknown, and will I ever get to meet our 2 new grandchildren before they start school!

What about Alison, a single mum from Coolangatta? She shared—

My kids had to move primary school ...

Mrs Gilbert interjected.

Mrs GERBER: This is not funny, member for Mackay. Alison continues—

My youngest cried himself to sleep for weeks ... Every day he asks when he can go back to his old school. On his Letter to Santa all he asked for was for the border to reopen so he can return to his old school and see his friends. He hasn't seen any of them since July. It's heartbreaking.

How about Pam from Bilinga? She writes—

I am a disability care worker. I live in Bilinga but I work in Banora, which has meant many days sitting in my car for hours to cross the border.

Jo-Anne, also from Bilinga, wrote—

I work as a fitness instructor across the border in Chinderah. I had to give up my job. It was not financially viable to line up for two hours to cross the border to teach a 45-minute class.

Gillian from Elanora shared—

My husband and children are not able to see our entire family as they live across the border. We are impacted significantly both mentally and emotionally by not being able to see them, this has been a very difficult time.

We have consistently asked for the same thing from the Premier and this state government. We have shouldered this burden so the Premier can stand up here in this chamber and say that she kept Queensland safe. It is about time this Queensland parliament and this government stood up for the border community and released the plan so that we can have some certainty for Christmas. The best Christmas present this Premier can give us is to release the plan.

Government members interjected.

Mrs GERBER: You all should be listening. This is an important topic. It is important to my community.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! The member's time has expired. The House will come to order. I do have a blank sheet of warnings here. I want to keep it that way.