




Speech By
Ray Stevens

MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH

Record of Proceedings, 16 September 2021

ADJOURNMENT

Coronavirus, Vaccination

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (6.06 pm): The Gold Coast has suffered inexorably from the closure of the state border due to COVID-19 concerns. We are 20 months into this global pandemic and little has been done by the Palaszczuk Labor state government over those 20 months to ameliorate the devastating economic consequences of this life-threatening disease. There is, and always has been since the pandemic onset, only one answer to effectively minimise the lifestyle disruption to Queenslanders and Gold Coasters—particularly as the closest metropolitan inhabitants to the New South Wales border—and that is to get everyone vaccinated.

It is appalling that after 20 months Queensland has the lowest vaccination rate of all of Australia at 38.78 per cent. That pathetic, wooden-spoon statistic is the result of one thing and one thing only, and that is the deliberate scare tactics employed by the Premier—in consultation with her sidekick Chief Health Officer—in the media on a daily basis with the shameful political tactic of trying to embarrass the Prime Minister Scott Morrison in the lead-up to the imminent federal election. The Labor Party family knows that 'Albo' is unelectable, yet the 'Rudd rules' make it almost impossible to get rid of him and put another more appealing Labor leader in before the election. So the newly elected and 'Corona popular' Premier Palaszczuk has been called upon by the Labor backroom boys to do as much damage as possible in Queensland to Morrison, where he electorally won the last election. Remember: how good is Queensland? The scare campaign around the AstraZeneca vaccine was run in tandem by the Premier and Chief Health Officer. Who could forget the Chief Health Officer's gross recommendation about 18-year-olds getting blood clots when the reality is, according to my GP, that they would have more chance of being hit by lightning—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Member for Mermaid Beach, sorry to pull you up midsentence. I have just taken some advice. You were not using correct titles when referring to the Premier. I would ask you to use correct titles in the chamber, please. I am not going to repeat what you said.

Mr STEVENS: The Premier's outrageous statement that young children should be vaccinated, which she later tried to manipulate away from, is just shameful grubby Labor politics about a medical problem that should be immune from political point-scoring. Even I was reluctant to get an AstraZeneca vaccination after the dire warnings about blood clots from our Chief Health Officer. However, after speaking to my GP and being totally reassured about the vaccine, I am on my way to being fully vaccinated and protected from the ravages of COVID-19—which even the Premier admits now will arrive in Queensland.

The Premier knew that Pfizer was being used by other countries that were more under the pump than Australia, but she continued to scare everybody about AstraZeneca. That is why we are last in Australia's vaccination program, that is why our border will be the last to open up, and that is why small and family businesses will struggle for many more months to come. The Premier is playing catch-up

now by saying 'get vaccinated with whatever your GP recommends' and opening hubs with both Pfizer and AZ available, but she cannot hide the fact that her vaccination scare campaign against the Morrison government will have dire consequential economic outcomes for Queensland, and Queensland's pain will be the Premier's blame.