



Speech By  
**Ros Bates**


**MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA**

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Record of Proceedings, 1 September 2021

## **MOTION**

### **Palaszczuk Labor Government, Ipsos Polling Data; Order to Table Documents**

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (5.20 pm): I rise to speak on the private member's motion moved by the LNP and to support it. Make no bones about it: the Premier should release that information. Why does the government have an issue with releasing to the public what the public thinks about COVID? When you say it like that, it does not sound like such a big deal, does it? And that is because it is not. If key COVID decisions are not being made based on the polling undertaken by the government, then it should be released. For fair, decent and transparent public administration, the Premier should table these documents. More than that, the documents should be tabled for the Queenslanders who have been put out of work, for the small and family businesses that have been forced to close, for the Queenslanders separated by borders—interstate and international. They have a right to know. The parliament has a right to know. Queenslanders have a right to know.

People can accept decisions which are made on expert medical advice. Queenslanders have shown that they are prepared to do that time and time again, but people will not cop decisions that are made for the sake of politics. If there is nothing to hide in the polling, then there is nothing to hide from Queenslanders. I wonder if that sentiment polling captures Queensland's vaccine hesitancy rate across the period that the Premier flip-flopped when it came to getting her COVID-19 vaccine.

A true leader instils confidence and leads by example. Queenslanders deserve that, but, sadly, they did not get it from the Premier. Every excuse in the book was used by the Premier earlier this year, wasn't it? First we had the flu vaccination. Important yes, but it could have waited surely until the Premier had had her COVID-19 vaccine. Then who could forget the famous dog bite and the subsequent tetanus shot? I wonder what the polling said about that. And then to round out the trifecta of excuses, we had the Premier say that she needed a particular brand of the vaccine before jetting off to Tokyo. Of course, that comment was made not long after the Premier culled the number of international arrivals. Those comments must have had some blowback in the polling. The hypocrisy, the mixed messages, the complete and utter confusion! With nearly \$500,000 worth of polling, one would think that these things would have been ironed out. Evidently not. The government's decisions impact every Queensland, whether it is the cafe owner at the end of the street, the truckie driving their haul up the coast or the sound technician who cannot get a job because there are no more live gigs.

Also, there are plenty of compassionate cases to consider. A mother talked to me about her son who had been stuck at boarding school over the border—a teenage boy pursuing his dream career who has slowly lost all hope. Now she fears for his mental health and his life. She has watched her bright young man become a boy without hope, without the chance to be held and supported by his family in Queensland. Another mother told me how her son had gone to see his father and had to flee in fear of his life because of domestic violence. He drove 20 hours through the night from Victoria and was stopped at Goondiwindi. Despite Victorian police advising him that fleeing domestic violence was grounds for a border pass exemption, the officer on the border at Goondiwindi told him to turn around—

turn around and sleep in his freezing car at a truck stop. I have just heard that his request for an exemption has been knocked back. Now she, too, has serious concerns for this young man and both his mental and physical safety.

Then there is the tragic case of a mother who travelled to Narrabri after her son was murdered. She was travelling with his ashes back to her family farm in southern Queensland when she, too, was stopped. 'Fly into Queensland,' she was told. 'Travel from the border back to Sydney to get a flight to Brisbane, and then spend two weeks with your young son's ashes in a hotel room.' Her husband is devastated talking about the terrible toll the situation is taking on his wife at an already unfathomably sad time, yet a plane landing with an NRL entourage touched down here earlier this week. Seriously, does the government care about vulnerable Queenslanders who are trapped across the border? They are willing to play by the rules, but the Premier keeps changing them. Let the openness and transparency begin on 14 September when the Premier should table the Ipsos community sentiment polling about the pandemic for the government. It is time for the government to be honest with Queenslanders.