




Speech By
Ros Bates

MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA

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MOTION

Coronavirus, Vaccination Mandate

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (4.04 pm): I want to echo what I said the last time parliament sat. I had my vaccination before the Premier. I had my vaccination before the health minister. My message—my position—is clear when it comes to vaccines. I back them to the hilt. It is our silver bullet. It is a marvel of modern science. I have said it to my family. I have said it to my friends. I have said it privately. I have said it publicly. I have said it time and time again at every press conference. I have said it time and time again in this chamber. My position is unequivocal. I back the AHPCC statement on vaccines for health workers. I back Queensland Health's direction to their staff in hospital settings to get the jab. I back the vaccine—full stop, end of story. Let the record show though that this is what the QNMU said about mandatory vaccinations—

We will always recognise that individuals have the right to make personal choices about immunisation.

The Australian Workers' Union said—

We have strongly advocated to government and industry that COVID-19 vaccinations should be voluntary.

To hound me and the opposition as being anti-vaxxers, even after comments like this by their own unions! Mr Speaker, some members of the cabinet and the caucus ought to look in their own backyard after they cast aspersions.

This pandemic has taught us many things, not the least of which is the impossibly low levels this government will stoop to in order to protect its political hide. Those on the government benches have allowed public debate to descend into petty bickering in an attempt to distract from the real issues at play here in Queensland. We have a health system which the government is losing control of. Let's face it: they are losing control of Queensland Health, and that was happening long before COVID—ramping, elective surgery, code yellows, you name it. The stats back it up.

Why aren't we here talking about that? I will tell you why—because those opposite do not want to. I say to those opposite: your mediocrity and your cheap games are hurting every resident in this great state. In its insistence to aimlessly carry on with this falsehood about opposition and the vaccine, the government has only added fuel to the anti-vaccine fire. Those opposite should be building up the vaccine. Instead, with their incessant droning on this issue, they are inadvertently serving to tear it down. It is childish, it is irresponsible and, frankly, it is pathetic.

They seek to divide our community. They peddle the politics of fear. I, and we, will not cop it. I stand for the politics of hope over the politics of fear. Listening to scientific advice and getting the vaccine should not be a political issue, but there is not an issue that this government will not politicise if it can score a political point.

(Time expired)