




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MIRANI

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PUBLIC HEALTH AND OTHER LEGISLATION (FURTHER EXTENSION OF EXPIRING PROVISIONS) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (11.55 am): I rise to speak on the Public Health and Other Legislation (Further Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Bill. I would like to acknowledge the member for Maiwar's contribution. There is a lot of sense in that committee process. I would also like to acknowledge the member for Noosa's contribution today. There has been a radical departure from public health best practice going back centuries, where infectious diseases were controlled by the confinement and isolation of infected people, not the confinement and isolation of the healthy. Maintaining an eradication strategy risks a future of economic impoverishment, endless snap lockdowns, disruptive travel restrictions, panic buying, rationing and ongoing penalties for rule breakers.

In relation to transparency, we need to understand where this is going to stop, what is initiating these lockdowns and what is happening. As the member for Maiwar said, there is a very big push to conspiracy theories because we do not know what is going on within those areas.

Ms Boyd: You're pushing the conspiracy theories.

Mr ANDREW: No, I am not. People must be given access to all the information the government has on this disease, not just cherry picked bits and pieces. We need to know how many of these cases are asymptomatic—

Government members interjected.

Mr ANDREW: Madam Deputy Speaker, I am not taking interjections. We need to know how many cases are in hospital, how many are in ICUs, how many were breakthrough cases and much, much more. There also needs to be clarity about transmission of the disease outdoors. The mantra of keeping us safe is very good, but we need to start paying attention to some of the other problems and crises we are seeing out there.

Businesses are closing, workers are being laid off and the mental health of Queenslanders has reached crisis point. There are a lot of people contacting a lot of members on both sides of the House and the crossbench. Region wide lockdowns are being mandated with little or no notice, upending businesses which are banned from opening while McDonald's and Bunnings stay open. State borders are closed, then reopened, then closed again. Others are banned from visiting dying relatives interstate or accessing life-saving treatments, even when fully vaccinated. All of this, while Hollywood celebrities jet in and out with no problems. School and community sporting events are being shut down and social gatherings banned, while 40,000 fans are allowed to pack a stadium to watch a football match. For a country that once prided itself on egalitarian ideals—of a fair go for all and a healthy scepticism of authority—double standards like these have been hard to take.

The emergency powers provisions being extended by this bill were intended to be discretionary, targeted and strictly time limited. What must be made clear is that delegated legislation is an exception to the separation of powers. It grants the power of lawmaking to the executive, including unelected

departmental officials, outside the close scrutiny and oversight of this parliament. Even during times of emergency, it is important that a committee such as the one the Greens member just put forward would enable people to retain the ability to hold their governments to account. This is a prime example of the difference between ruling and governing a state. When you rule, you answer to no-one. When you govern you are accountable for every action that you take.