



Speech By  
**Aaron Harper**


**MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA**

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Record of Proceedings, 25 May 2022

**MOTION**

**Central Queensland, Health Services**

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (5.15 pm): It would be good if they could use their allotted five minutes. I wish I had more—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Through the chair, member.

**Mr HARPER:** I rise to speak to the amendment moved by the minister. Record investment in health has restored the thousands of nurses that the LNP sacked in their time in government. Do those opposite want to talk about investment in Central Queensland? Since 2015 there have been 119 doctors, 498 nurses and 153 allied health staff—all increased under the Labor government.

I was part of the Ambulance Service prior to getting elected. I saw staff get sacked. At least 50 per cent of the former Newman government cabinet—the Leader of the Opposition knows this well—would meet with ambulance officers in secret in Townsville and try to get dirt on the Bligh government. I know those sly operators. That is what they did then and that is what they are doing now. We have a very proud record.

I know that it is the member for Mudgeeraba's birthday. I am trying to be kind. I have +2.00 power glasses. I am not sure what her glasses are, but the *Destination 2030* report is in the future. In 2025 there are some milestones. We are in 2022. It is all underway.

In contrast, all you can do is look back at your dismal record of sacking nurses. Disgraceful! Sacking nurses—4,000 nurses! Allied health staff! How embarrassing to sit there and think that you have some kind of proud record on health investment.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr HARPER:** Absolutely shameful, the lot of you. Members opposite picked on three of the best members. Of course they get personal and nasty. I tell you now: the good member for Gladstone, the member for Keppel and the member for Rockhampton all turned up to the health committee public hearings in their areas. None of you lot turned up there. None of you lot turned up!

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, member! Through the chair.

**Mr HARPER:** They heard how difficult it was for their people to get access to a GP. Let's not forget the report. It outlines exactly what the pressures are on our public health system. I say to those members: grow some spine, front up to the public hearings and hear what the challenges are in the health space—the real pressures. The LNP in this state failed to pick up the phone when Scott Morrison was prime minister and ask for increased funding. That was non-negotiable!

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr HARPER:** You should hide, too. You should put your head down a little bit in shame, Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, members! Your comments will come through the chair.

**Mr HARPER:** Yes, shake your head, Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member, you are repeatedly ignoring my advice to put your comments through the chair. If you continue to do that, I will warn you.

**Mr HARPER:** The LNP has a very poor record of cutting and sacking in relation to health services in this state. We have invested. We have restored the funding. We have put record funding into health. We should be proud of what we have done. There is more to do. By contrast, we have that lot there!

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock.

**Mr HARPER:** I do not know how they can sleep straight.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Buderim, you are warned.

**Mr HARPER:** There has been a record investment in Central Queensland health and it is because of the strong advocacy of the local members who asked for more, and they are getting more. They are getting a record investment in health. I cannot wait for the budget to be announced by the Treasurer in just a few weeks time. I hope all members of the LNP pay attention because we are going to invest more in the health space because we are aware of the ageing and growing population and the pressures in the public health space. We are the ones who are restoring nurses. Those opposite have a poor track record. They should hang their heads in shame. Who could sack 4,000 nurses and think that is a good thing? I would shake my head too, Leader of the Opposition. That was an absolute disgrace.

There is record investment under the Labor government but record cuts under the former Newman government. They should all hang their head in shame.

*(Time expired)*