



Speech By  
**Ali King**


**MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE**

---

Record of Proceedings, 24 February 2022

## **PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT**

### **Pumicestone Electorate, GPs**

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (2.51 pm): For over a year now, I have been working hard to get the federal government to fix our GP crisis in Pumicestone. When the federal government stripped away our Distribution Priority Area status in 2019, they also stripped away incentives for doctors to live and work in our community. The Pumicestone community is the oldest state electorate in Queensland, and residents face isolation and poor health. Many struggle to afford petrol for their cars, let alone GP gap payments.

Recently, I was able to share good news that our grassroots campaign had worked and DPA status was being restored to Bribe Island, but I cannot forget that just four months earlier Minister Hunt's Chief of Staff told me that Pumicestone had plenty of GPs and locals did not have a problem. What a slap in the face to vulnerable people waiting up to four weeks for GP appointments or who cannot get on the books of a GP at all. Make no mistake, it was only our community's strong advocacy plus the looming federal election that got this change across the line but, as usual, it is too little, too late for the Morrison government who utterly failed to return DPA status to high-needs areas like Caboolture, Ningi, Beachmere and Elimbah, all of whom have residents who are in poor health and desperately need to get in to see a GP when they are sick, not three weeks from when they are sick.

In a swinging seat like the federal seat of Longman, the Morrison government only helps those they think of as potential LNP voters. Luckily, our Labor federal candidate for Longman, Rebecca Fanning, is on our side when it comes to health care. First of all, Rebecca got federal shadow health minister Mark Butler to Pumicestone to hear about the issue, and then she got Labor leader Anthony Albanese out to Pumicestone to see the GP crisis for himself. Albo did not parade around washing people's hair or welding for photo shoots. He spoke with the exhausted doctors and worried residents that our GP crisis impacts every single day. Dr Steve Kearney of Ningi Doctors said—

If DPA support is not provided, failure is only a matter of time for my practice, leaving a vulnerable population without primary medical care and a wider region without any extended GP service.

Rebecca Fanning and Albo listened and they acted, and if Labor wins the federal election all of Pumicestone will get GP priority status, meaning more GPs, more appointments and shorter waiting times for our community.

To the 1,176 people who signed my petition calling to fix our GP crisis, thank you. I am proud to work hard every day to get the people of Pumicestone more health care closer to home. Now you deserve an MP who does the same. Thank you, Rebecca Fanning. Thank you, federal Labor, for your hard work to fix our GP crisis.