




Speech By
Brittany Lauga

MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

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MOTION

Minister for Health and Ambulance Services

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (5.27 pm): I rise this evening to speak against the motion moved by the member for Mudgeeraba and in support of the amendment moved by the Treasurer. I support our health minister, Yvette D'Ath. She is a fine leader and a caring minister. One of the greatest traits that I love about our health minister is that she cares about people. She cares about our healthcare workers. You will never hear her coming into this place calling our regional healthcare workers duds. That was an interesting contribution from the member for Nanango—lots of talk about Mackay and the member for Mackay. Look out, member for Mackay. You would think the member for Nanango might come in here and talk about health investments in Nanango, like that brand new \$92.5 million hospital in Kingaroy. The town—

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock! Member for Bulimba and member for Nanango, you will cease your quarrelling across the chamber. You are both warned under the standing orders.

Ms LAUGA: First of all, the member for Nanango could have come in here and condemned the comments by the member for Mudgeeraba where she called regional healthcare workers duds. She should have done that but, no, she said nothing in this place about her comments. In fact, none of those opposite have said anything about the comments by the member of Mudgeeraba. The standard that you walk past is the standard that you accept. All of those members opposite have ignored the member for Mudgeeraba's disgraceful comments about regional healthcare workers—when she called them duds. Last week when I was making a private member's statement the member for Nanango interjected numerous times in support of the member for Mudgeeraba when I was speaking about the comments she had made.

Secondly, I would have thought that the member for Nanango would come in here and talk about the wonderful health investment in her electorate: the \$92.5 million brand new hospital in Kingaroy, the town that I was born in. That project created 72 new jobs during construction. It involved an expanded renal dialysis unit and increased specialist outpatient services. The new hospital increased the number of patient treatment spaces from 46 to 66 and improved the hospital's capacity as a hub for trauma, paediatric, obstetric, rehabilitation and mental health services. What a wonderful project in the member for Nanango's electorate, but we do not hear anything about that in this place. This includes four treatment spaces for assessing mental health patients, increased security, staff who have been trained in supporting patients with complex mental health needs—all staff who are not duds—and a secure access room staff can use as a safe room if needed. Can I congratulate the Darling Downs health staff—also not duds—and the infrastructure team—also not duds—for the job they have done in ensuring the project has progressed on schedule with minimal impact on people accessing services at the hospital.

I am proud of the Palaszczuk government's record on health. I am surprised that the opposition is actually going down this path tonight with this motion, a path which brings up a very sad history for the LNP. Let's not forget—and I know that the thousands of healthcare workers have not forgotten—that the LNP sacked 4,400 healthcare workers. The member for Mudgeeraba, the member for Nanango and the member for Broadwater—in fact, 40 per cent of the opposition front bench—sat around the Newman cabinet table and agreed to sack 4,400 healthcare workers. Then they have the hide to come in here and move this motion about our healthcare workers and our health minister considering the amazing job our health minister has done undoing Can-do Campbell—all that hard work. In fact, 197 doctors, nurses and healthcare workers in my electorate in the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service were sacked under those opposite. Under Labor, I am proud that 686 extra frontline staff have been employed. That is 130 additional doctors, 423 nurses and midwives and 133 health professionals who are now working in our Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service despite the fact that those opposite cut 197 full-time jobs from our HHS.

It was interesting to hear this morning that the opposition is now interested in GPs considering not only did they pick big fights with doctors when they were in government but also they were completely silent about GPs when their mates were in government in Canberra. We know that under the Liberals Medicare has faced rolling cuts and attacks beginning with attempts to end universal fee-free health care with a GP co-payment every time someone sees a doctor followed by a cut of billions with a six-year freeze on Medicare rebates. I do not support the motion moved by the member for Mudgeeraba. I support the amendment.