




Speech By
Bryson Head

MEMBER FOR CALLIDE

Record of Proceedings, 1 December 2022

ADJOURNMENT

Callide Electorate, Maternity Services

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (6.25 pm): The electorate of Callide remains without any maternity wards across 14 hospitals. Gladstone, which is the next closest maternity ward, remains on bypass. This is the result of a government that governs for themselves and not for everyday Queenslanders. They try to blame staff shortages. Tell me this: were staff shortages the problem in the 1990s when they closed Moura, Jandowae, Miles, Taroom, Gayndah, Monto and Mundubbera, and more recently when they closed Chinchilla for a second time? This is the legacy of Labor governments in Queensland. They get up and find excuses left, right and centre.

I can tell members now that the patience of mothers in Queensland is wearing thin. Apparently staff shortages have been on the horizon for a very long time. If so, then the minister can come in here and spell out what the Labor government has been doing for the last eight years. This government sat on their hands and chose to close maternity services in local communities. The result of this is that mothers are having to risk giving birth on the side of major highways. This is the reality for two incredible mothers I have spoken about previously.

The Labor Party will try to spin the mistruth that they are good for Queensland when it comes to health. The facts and reality tell a completely different story. The Gladstone Hospital services an area of over 60,000 people and records 600 births in a year. It also services Calliope. That is why this week I tabled a petition with 2,885 signatures. It was launched by the federal member for Flynn, and given the member for Gladstone continues to fail in his advocacy on this matter, I was more than happy to take on this fight. The petition calls on the Premier and the Minister for Health to deliver adequate maternity services, resourcing and funding to the Gladstone Hospital. I thank the nearly 3,000 people who signed it. Having met a number of them personally, I know the passion they have for their community and their concerns about the need for local maternity services.

Saturday marks 100 full days since Biloela went on bypass, with not a mention by the Minister for Health of when it will reopen. Next week, Gladstone surpasses 150 days and the member for Gladstone is still taking his ministerial paycheque after claiming he will resign. He can prove to his community that he was not just offering lip-service and honour his word. If he and the Minister for Health are serious about the safety of mothers in Queensland, they need to outline a plan with clear dates on the return of services. All Queenslanders deserve local health services.