




Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

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MOTION

Minister for Health and Ambulance Services

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (5.21 pm): I rise to support the shadow health minister's motion before this House. If that was an audition to be the next minister for health in Queensland, I would say that the Minister for Health's job is safe so far. Let's look down the list—

Mr HARPER: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence and ask the member to withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: Member, you have taken personal offence to which aspect?

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left, I will hear the member.

Mr HARPER: Whatever the inference was that I would be some kind of hopeless health minister. As chair of the health committee, I am—

Mr SPEAKER: You are not debating the point, member, unless you can—

Mr HARPER: I take personal offence at the remarks of the member for Nanango.

Mr SPEAKER: Member, it is a general inference, not one directly at your direction. However, member for Nanango, I will caution you to ensure you are not labelling members incorrectly in the chamber.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Sure thing, thank you, Mr Speaker. What I will say is that it sounded like the member for Thuringowa was just trying to read out his resume. He was just trying to say, 'Hang on a minute, I'm a contender; I have been the chair of the health committee,' and he wants to go straight to the frontbench. I say to the member for Thuringowa: I think the health minister's job is safe until we hear from the next person. Who is that going to be? The next one to speak is the member for Keppel. At least the member for Keppel is an assistant minister.

I want to spend some time talking about the horrendous failures of the health system in Queensland in and around Mackay. I thought I would come in here today and probably speak following the Assistant Minister for Health, the member for Mackay. It is one region that deserves better health care. It is one region that deserves an assistant health minister to stand up for the over 20 women who can never again have children, who have been harmed. If that assistant health minister wants to be the health minister, she needs to look in her own backyard at the failings of the health minister in that region. It is an absolute national disgrace.

I actually googled 'Mackay Health'. In just the last three or four days, there have been these headlines: 'Mackay Base Hospital—midwives furious', 'Women harmed at Mackay Base Hospital', 'Mackay Base Hospital victims meet Yvette D'Ath—not happy', 'Misconception', 'Complaints'—it just goes on and on. This is only for the last couple of days. Yet the assistant health minister is no better than the Minister for Health. They are absolutely clueless.

Let's have a look at what else is going on in that region. Clermont—the member for Burdekin has been advocating for a Queensland Health GP doctor for four years. Four years! What has the Minister for Health done? Nothing! Absolutely nothing! What about Callide? The member for Callide is on the speaking list, so he can talk about that.

I will say as well—and I have said this in the House many times: when I decided to run for parliament to represent the great seat of Nanango, it was because Anna Bligh stood up. The Premier was in that cabinet. The Treasurer was in that cabinet. The then premier, Anna Bligh, stood up and said, 'The health system is such a basket case, we are going to split it into two.' What was the ambulance ramping at that time? It was 30 per cent. What is it right now? It is 44 per cent. When Anna Bligh was the premier of Queensland, the member for Inala was in the cabinet, along with several other ministers. If they determined that the health system was so bad it had to be split into two, what is the health minister going to do? Split it into three or four? The health minister obviously has no ability to manage her department.

The problem is that it is the health of the people of Queensland that is at risk. That is the issue here. When we on this side of the House say that we have no confidence in the health minister, we already know that the member for Thuringowa has no confidence; he did not even mention it. The Treasurer has no confidence; he did not even mention it.

Mr HARPER: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Clearly, the member did not hear my contribution. I indeed did express confidence in our health minister.

Mr SPEAKER: The member will resume his seat. You have had an opportunity to contribute. It is not a point of order. I will caution all members that if I hear frivolous points of order today it will result in members leaving the chamber. I hope that is clear.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Here in Queensland, 31 per cent of patients—so 31 people out of every 100—presenting at our emergency departments are not seen in time. What about the pressure that puts on our hardworking health workers? What about that pressure? That is why the health minister must go. If the Premier does not have the backbone to sack the health minister, the minister herself should stand up and resign immediately because it is embarrassing the government. We know that no-one in the cabinet supports her. We know that none on the backbench will support her. We on this side do not support her. I am sure the crossbench do not support her. The only one left standing is the health minister, and she must go.

(Time expired)