




Speech By
Robbie Katter

MEMBER FOR TRAEGER

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT

Integrity in Government

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (2.43 pm): I want to speak about the integrity crisis facing the government and how that impacts on rural and regional areas and what it means to me as leader of the KAP. We are not too concerned when some of these issues get raised from time to time because they seem to be associated with political gamesmanship. I think a lot of the public tune out to some of these issues that face the government when they get raised, but it is different when a laptop gets taken and names are deleted. We know that there is a name being thrown around the place now that people know, and I think that is going to hit the airtime soon. When this starts happening, you start to think about the impacts, and I will put some context around that.

We have been saying for years that hospitals are underfunded in the west, particularly in my Traeger electorate. We have been saying, 'It's underfunded. It's underfunded.' The board started to become bold and they said, 'You're not giving us enough money to keep the doors open and to pay the doctors and nurses.' What happened to the board? They were all sacked. Why? Apparently, they were incompetent. That is interesting, because one of them was a financial controller at Mount Isa Mines and the other is the Mother Teresa of rural health, Dr Don Bowley. Apparently they were all incompetent so they were sacked. What for? Because they were telling the government things they did not want to hear.

The next issue is youth crime in Townsville, Cairns and Mount Isa. We are trying to fix it. The government may not have an answer for it, but they have to own the problem. That is the start of fixing it—to own the problem. They need to say, 'Okay. It is a problem and we're having trouble.' Do not pretend it is not there. We now have a culture of fear, and then someone like me says that there is a culture of fear. If you are stealing laptops, these people come out and say, 'Yes, there is a culture,' and this is what you get.

It would be easy for the Premier to turn around and own it. For a start, she just has to own it and say, 'Okay. I do have a problem.' She cannot come in here and pretend it is not a problem. That is throwing it back in our faces and pretending there is not a problem. There is a problem out there and it does have consequences. They are not the government's Public Service; they are the people's Public Service. They are out there to try to help fix youth crime and try to help fix the hospitals. We may not be able to get the money for the hospital, but own it. That is the problem. That is where the rubber hits the road. That is why people should be angry and take an interest when there are concerns about that.

We also want to know about lobbyists. We get bad decisions made around tenders and decision-making. We will be watching very closely with hawk eyes at things like the Flinders River tender allocation. We do not want big corporates coming in and ruining things for communities there. We do not want big corporates getting their way with the transmission line either. We will be watching the lobbyists who surround this like a hawk.

The last point I want to make is that the KAP is still counting the costs of the decisions of the Premier. She is the only Premier ever to be found in contempt of parliament because we did not agree with her point of view. We had four staff but we now have 1½. There are consequences to this and it is very real. The Premier has form on this. As a leader, she needs to demonstrate to the people of Queensland that we can have faith in her government. We do not need to get rid of her; we just need her to change her ways and she needs to own these mistakes.