




Speech By
Ros Bates

MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA

Record of Proceedings, 12 May 2022

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (3.07 pm): I have been looking forward to this. First let me pay tribute to my fellow nurses on this International Nurses Day. Those men and women who suit up, donning restrictive PPE every day, have been at the front line of our pandemic response. Often putting their own safety last, they have helped heal the thousands of Queenslanders who have had COVID and supported their families as they have navigated this terrible virus. All the while they have continued to help all the patients who are still accessing our health services because that did not stop for the coronavirus. They are heroes answering the calling that is nursing, one of the world's greatest vocations. Thank you for your service and your sacrifice.

Their dedication is the reason I am so angry about this report, which is a sham: 269 pages of blame, distract and attack; 269 pages of pointing the finger at everybody else. The member for Thuringowa says we should be identifying the cause of ramping. I can tell the member for Thuringowa what the cause of ramping is. It is a Labor government! Do members know how many times the words 'ambulance ramping' appear in those 269 pages? Not once! My fellow nurses and all the other health professionals in this state deserve so much better. This report tells you everything you need to know about those opposite and their plan to fix the Queensland health crisis: they do not have one. They do not have a plan, with the exception of blaming someone else. People have seen it for what it is. This report has been publicly hammered from all corners, not least of all by the AMAQ, who said—

When we saw the report, it was really disappointing.

It really just smacks of blame-shifting.

What we need to see is a strategy from Queensland Health ... and that's not actually a Commonwealth issue.

Let me repeat: 'it smacks of blame-shifting'. Say no more. Queensland Health is in crisis. That is now a well-known fact. Here in Queensland, ambulance ramping is the worst in the country. From the moment the Minister for Health read out the terms of reference of the inquiry the motive behind it was clear. It was not about finding solutions to fix the crisis; it was about creating a political weapon in the shadows of a federal election. In the midst of the Queensland health crisis, which those opposite are responsible for, they chose to launch a parliamentary inquiry into everything but Queensland Health. It is so ridiculous and reeks of such arrogance that you actually could not make it up.

Unbelievably, yesterday we had the minister standing up and congratulating the chair of the committee, the member for Thuringowa, for doing such a great job—although, seriously, the minister does owe him some thanks, having lobbed him with this report. The poor old member for Thuringowa was thrown the mother of all hospital passes when this inquiry landed in his lap but he played the game. A case in point was the public hearing on 29 November 2021. After the former director-general spoke about lost ambulance hours in his address to the committee, the member for Southport rightly asked if those numbers could be provided to the committee.

In the official transcript, the member for Southport said, 'Can I also ask for a breakdown by each of those service areas in terms of lost hours?' Do members know how the member for Thuringowa responded? The member said, 'What is that?' I can tell the member what it is: it is the time our paramedics spend stuck on hospital ramps and in corridors and hallways. Of all the people in this place, the member for Thuringowa should know that. For the record, last year it was over 130,000 hours, which is the most recorded in Queensland history. We had to prise that information out of the health minister after months of asking those questions. Then the member for Thuringowa decided the question was slightly outside the scope of the inquiry. Give me a break! That should tell you everything you need to know about this report: contrived, blame-shifting and a complete sham.

My heart goes out to those individuals and organisations that spent a lot of time, effort and energy contributing to this report. Many did so in good faith, hoping their submissions or evidence would help improve our system. Like them, the opposition wants to see exceptional patient care delivered for Queenslanders, no matter where they live. Sadly, the findings of this inquiry will not deliver that. The state government chose to look at everyone else's problems, just not their own. The Queensland parliament owes it to Queensland to properly examine, review and scrutinise the problems facing our health system. That is rightly what the Queensland public expects. However, this inquiry did not deliver that. It did not even come close. It was just a sham.