



Speech By  
**Ros Bates**

**MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA**

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Record of Proceedings, 16 August 2022


## **APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**

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#### **Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)**

#### **Appropriation Bill**

#### **Health and Environment Committee, Report**

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (4.50 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Health and Environment Committee report No. 22. It has been nearly two months since the Treasurer handed down his budget and let me tell the House that that budget is looking more flimsy, more shambolic and more hopeless with every day that has gone by since. The Treasurer has a glass jaw—that is a well-known fact—but as his budget has unravelled over the past week we also know his castle is made of sand too. There is no more evidence than in the health and ambulance services portfolio, which is now of course shackled with an incompetent and embattled minister at its helm.

We all heard them crow about the \$9.785 billion capacity expansion program which apparently will be the panacea to the crisis gripping our hospitals each and every day, but do members know how much money was budgeted this financial year for that program? Just \$80 million. That is less than one per cent of the total which has been promised. It is a ruse; it is a joke. What is more, nearly 40 per cent of that capacity expansion program is beyond the forwards. The money is not there. Anyone can look for it in the budget papers, but they will not find it.

Let us move on from that shambolic announcement to another which was a fixture of this budget. The Satellite Hospitals Program was the government's flagship health announcement at the 2020 election. It has very quickly become an albatross around the neck of those opposite. These facilities are \$15 million over budget and nobody knows when they are going to be finished. They were meant to be finished in early 2023. Then the Premier gave a deadline of 19 May 2023. That has been blown out of the water now too. We heard that the government is now hoping that they will be finished by the end of next year. It seems like there is a lot of that in this budget—close your eyes, hold on and hope.

Let me say that Queenslanders do not like to be taken for a ride. These satellite facilities have been derided by clinicians and community members alike—not a single overnight bed, not a single emergency department and not a single operating theatre. The AMAQ remains concerned about investments in so-called satellite hospitals. In fact, it says that 'they are only hospitals by name and certainly not by nature'.

Clearly nobody told the member for Pumicestone these were going to be fake hospitals. The photos of the member on the side of the road with a sign saying 'Labor will build a Bribie hospital' still sit on her Facebook page. Those photos have not aged well, member for Pumicestone. We heard from

locals on Bribie who told us exactly how they feel about not being told the truth. The member was not honest with the residents of Bribie Island in October 2020 and the estimates process has proven just that.

The estimates hearing uncovered the true depths of the Queensland Health crisis, and when I say 'Queensland Health crisis' those are not just words; it is real. To the grandfather waiting years to see a specialist and then years for surgery, the crisis is real; to the mother frantically calling back triple 0 because the ambulance still has not arrived after an hour, the crisis is real; to the nurse who knows that the parents with their ill child at the triage window will not be seen for hours on hours, the crisis is real; to the doctor scrambling to find a bed on an already overcrowded ward, the crisis is real.

The Queensland Health crisis is real and the estimates process has shone a light on it. Across the state 45 per cent of all ambulances arriving at public hospitals will wait longer than the 30 minutes to offload their patients. We know many wait for hours and hours and some will wait as long as eight hours, and that is shameful. The estimates hearing also uncovered that last financial year more than 12,000 people waited longer than 24 hours in our EDs. That number is so large it boggles the mind. For the record, Queensland Health's target is four hours.

The minister has made it a habitual practice to conceal information about the performance of our health system. Only under the glare of estimates did we find out that there are now 12 ongoing investigations into alleged malpractice at the Caboolture Hospital. Let me repeat that—not one but 12. We also learnt that a death due to malpractice occurred sometime prior to 2020 at that hospital. That is deeply concerning and no stone should be left unturned in how and why that occurred. Those opposite have had seven years and three terms in office. In that time they have run Queensland Health into the ground and Labor is losing control of Queensland Health.

*(Time expired)*