




Speech By  
**Brent Mickelberg**

**MEMBER FOR BUDERIM**

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Record of Proceedings, 19 April 2023

### **HEALTH AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (2.56 pm): In my contribution today, I want to focus on the amendments to the Hospital and Health Boards Act. I say at the outset that we support measures to ensure the safety and wellbeing of public sector workers is protected. Our health workers are the key to ensuring Queenslanders are able to access quality health care in their hour of need. I place on record my thanks to those health workers for their commitment and sacrifice, particularly over the last couple of years. It is that commitment and sacrifice that is the reason for ensuring their welfare must be a priority. Forty per cent of doctors report that they have been bullied in any given year. Nurses report that they are subject to violence, dangerous workloads, moral distress and fatigue.

I have spoken previously about the toxic culture running through the wards of the Sunshine Coast University Hospital and about how bullying complaints and serious allegations were ignored by the hospital board, by Queensland Health and by the government. A number of years ago, multiple staff from the Sunshine Coast University Hospital came to me. They spoke of a dysfunctional workplace characterised by bullying, harassment and humiliation. They told me of their fear of reprisal by senior management, and they told me that patient care was suffering as a consequence.

At the time, the clinicians wrote to the director-general and to the board of the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service and they asked for intervention. They described it as a 'pervasive and brutal culture of blame, fear and retribution'. Doctors wrote directly to the board to raise their concerns and specifically called out the mismanagement and bullying of the former CEO, Naomi Dwyer, and her chief operating officer, Karlyn Chettleburgh. Rather than deal with those issues in a meaningful way, the concerns of frontline staff were dealt with in a superficial and inadequate manner by the members of the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service Board. I suggest that those board members failed to meet their obligation to take reasonable steps to ensure that the health service they were charged with overseeing met its health and safety obligations and that the executive officers of the health service were carrying out their duties in accordance with legislation, expected of every business and entity in the country.

There is little wonder that we have to have this legislation when the former board of the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service failed so miserably to look after the workers of the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service when they were afflicted by a CEO and a chief operating officer who were harming them regularly. That harm inflicted by Naomi Dwyer and Karlyn Chettleburgh and the culture they created at the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service drove doctors, nurses and administrators to resign from Queensland Health. Perhaps more concerningly—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Member for Buderim, the time for this stage of the debate has expired. Under the provisions of the business program agreed by the House and the time limit for this stage of the bill having expired, I call the Minister for Health to reply to the second reading debate.