




Speech By
Brittany Lauga

MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

Record of Proceedings, 12 September 2023

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Health System

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (2.36 pm): Every day in Queensland Health, over 6,100 people present to an emergency department, over 12,000 people receive care as an inpatient, 25,000 people receive community mental health care, almost 3,100 calls are made to triple 0 for an ambulance, and 127 babies are delivered. Above all, there are over 100,000 Queenslanders working hard to look after all of us. They are caring for our kids, our brothers, our sisters, our parents, our grandparents, our friends and our loved ones. The people of Queensland Health are heroes in every sense of the word and deserve our gratitude and respect.

However, Queenslanders will never forget that both the member for Mudgeeraba and the member for Broadwater sat around the cabinet table with Campbell Newman and took an axe to Queensland Health, slashing \$1.6 billion from its budget. In fact, 40 per cent of the LNP's front bench sat around that cabinet table.

In Central Queensland alone, 197 doctors, nurses and healthcare workers were sacked by the LNP from our hospitals. Under Campbell Newman and the member for Broadwater, the LNP sacked 4,400 healthcare workers across the state, including 1,800 nurses and midwives. They went to war with the doctors, attacking their pay and conditions, all while spending \$500,000 a fortnight paying contractors and consultants. They also cut the graduate intake to record lows and axed nursing and midwifery support and education.

Shockingly, Campbell Newman, the member for Broadwater and the LNP were the first government in Queensland's history to cut funding from mental health. They cut \$45 million in their first year and gave Queensland the lowest per capita staffing levels in the country.

In 2015, Queenslanders trusted our government to rebuild our health system and that is exactly what we have done. We have hired almost 19,000 frontline health workers and we have delivered thousands of new beds. The Palaszczuk government continues to deliver a world-class health system for our community. We have delivered record upon record health budget every year since we came to government and we are continuing to do that with—

Mr Head interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Callide, the member on their feet is not taking interjections. I have warned you before. I am giving you an official warning under the standing orders.

Ms LAUGA: I would love to know what the member for Callide thought about the LNP sacking 197 healthcare workers from the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service—197 healthcare workers from the hospitals that serve our communities in Central Queensland. We are continuing to deliver record budgets with \$24.15 billion operational funding in this financial year alone, which is a 9.6 per cent increase. Already over 1,000 healthcare workers have expressed interest in the Workforce

Attraction Incentive Scheme, which provides interstate health practitioners up to \$20,000 to move to Queensland and up to \$70,000 for doctors. I look forward to the boots hitting the ground in regional, remote and rural Queensland including in the electorate of Callide and across Central Queensland where we desperately need more healthcare workers, not fewer.

The Palaszczuk government's progressive coal royalties are delivering better health services for regional communities. I support progressive coal royalties, as does everyone on this side of the chamber and as does the majority of my community. Progressive coal royalties means that the royalties generated from our resources—Queenslanders' resources—go back into good jobs, better services and a great lifestyle. Progressive coal royalties are providing better and easier access to medical care for regional Queenslanders with a \$3.619 billion boost. Coal royalties are helping build, upgrade and expand hospitals across regional Queensland.

I would like to know whether the member for Callide supports progressive coal royalties which are building, upgrading and expanding regional hospitals, increasing treatment spaces and improving patient services. Does the member for Callide support the progressive coal royalties? Do those opposite support progressive coal royalties, because these progressive coal royalties are funding \$48 million for the new Moranbah Hospital, \$250 million for the Cairns Hospital expansion, \$250 million for the Mackay Base Hospital expansion—and I could go on.

Whilst the member for Burleigh has confirmed in this place that the LNP does not support progressive coal royalties, the rest of those opposite refuse to take a stance. All we have heard thus far is evasion, vagueness and ambivalence from the LNP. I am sure those opposite have made clear their position against progressive coal royalties behind closed doors with the Resources Council and multinational coal companies which, mind you, have all reported massive profits. I ask the question again: does the LNP support progressive coal royalties, which are delivering over \$7 billion to Queensland? Would the LNP keep our progressive coal royalties?

For so long as there is a Labor government in this state we will keep progressive coal royalties; we will invest in our healthcare workers and our hospitals; and we will invest in the health care of all Queenslanders no matter where they live.