




Speech By
Bryson Head

MEMBER FOR CALLIDE

Record of Proceedings, 12 September 2023

ADJOURNMENT

Callide Electorate, Maternity Services

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (7.13 pm): Would you believe that in 2015 the Labor government supported an LNP motion that said mothers-to-be across Queensland should continue to have the choice to have their children delivered locally. It is great to see the government was capable of supporting LNP motions at one stage. That said, it is incredibly disappointing when you put it in the context of where we are today. Maternity services provided in Queensland continue to decline. The north Queensland town of Ingham was listed in this motion as a service that was to be reinstated that calendar year. Then health minister and current premier agitator Treasurer Dick said how important maternity services are for that community. This service had been operating for many years, but only days ago under Premier Palaszczuk's fourth Minister for Health and Minister for Women Shannon Fentiman it went on bypass. The Labor health minister in 2019 Steven Miles, the current Deputy Premier and want-to-be premier, said 'Labor are doing all they can to improve maternity services even more in Queensland', yet here we are today with less. Minister D'Ath was never as vocal as her predecessors in pushing to reinstate maternity services. Maybe that is why we had the disaster that was the Gladstone maternity bypass.

Here we are today, four health ministers later, with not a single maternity ward left in Callide. Three have closed or been placed on apparent permanent bypass under Premier Palaszczuk. Chinchilla has been on bypass for over 2,000 days. That is what I would call closed. This government is all talk when it comes to service delivery, but the facts tell a very different story. They are too busy wrapped up in their own chaos and crisis, so busy spending all of their efforts and energy on fighting for the top job of premier that they cannot deliver essential health services to Queenslanders. Today Biloela has been on bypass for 383 days. The government has moved the goalposts for the Biloela maternity ward. Originally they needed an anaesthetist, then they needed a GP obstetrician. Now apparently the surgical theatre is not compliant with standards. When a government cannot even run a maintenance schedule, how can they be trusted to continue governing Queensland?

Today I launched a petition calling for the return of full birthing services to the Biloela Hospital with utmost priority. I urge Queenslanders to support this petition, as the government clearly cannot act without being forced to do so. They have sat on their hands while our services continue to be cut. They fixed Gladstone because it became a political problem. It is time they step up and start fixing patient problems too.