




Speech By
Dr Christian Rowan

MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

Record of Proceedings, 29 March 2023

MOTION: CAIRNS, TOWNSVILLE AND REDLANDS ELECTORATES

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (5.22 pm): I rise to support the motion as moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the member for Kawana, and I will try to bring some decorum and rationality to this debate unlike the puerile and facile contribution by the member for Thuringowa. The reaction from members opposite to this motion completely exposes the hypocrisy and duplicity of the Labor government.

Mr HARPER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Before I take the member's point of order, I appreciate your attempts to bring some decorum to the debate but your own side is actually interjecting so much I am having difficulty hearing you.

Mr HARPER: I take personal offence at the remarks of the member for Moggill and I ask him to withdraw.

Dr ROWAN: I withdraw. With regard to the Attorney-General's comments in relation to the candidates who have been selected, it is important to understand that the reason that the Liberal National Party has had to preselect candidates so early is the desperation of these communities around Queensland in relation to a myriad of issues. Unlike the Labor Party, these candidates have been selected on merit. Yes, they are all women, but they have been selected on merit. Rebecca Young in Redlands, Natalie Marr in Thuringowa and Yolonde Entsch in Cairns are excellent community champions who are there to address the issues that are occurring in all of those communities across Queensland.

We will see this more and more because, as issues continue to arise as they have been neglected by this government, communities across Queensland are crying out to get action. Let us run through a few of those issues because the state Labor government is refusing to be held to account.

Labor's track record speaks for itself. With respect to health and ambulance services, as has been revealed by the Liberal National Party today, new data shows that the number of patients waiting longer than the clinically recommended time frames for a specialist appointment has jumped from 104,000 in July 2022 to over 122,500 in January 2023. This is a blowout of 18 per cent in just six months. That is why this government should be listening to Queenslanders. This means something to the Queenslanders who are waiting on lists for the services they need. Whether that is in the Redlands or Cairns or Thuringowa or right across Queensland, this has a real impact on their lives.

Patients across Queensland are waiting longer in emergency departments. Figures released to the LNP opposition have revealed that across Queensland the number of patients languishing in emergency departments for more than 24 hours has skyrocketed by 225 per cent since Labor was first elected. When it comes to ambulance ramping, as we have heard as part of this debate, we have seen it reach as high as 73 per cent at the Redland Hospital. Three out of four patients are waiting in

ambulances and not being taken out of ambulances and getting the care they need within the clinically recommended time frames. It is not just happening in the Redlands. In the December quarter of last year ramping at the PA Hospital was 50 per cent, at Ipswich Hospital it was 55 per cent and at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital it was 51 per cent.

Just weeks ago we also saw the ambulance dispatch system suffer a mass outage. What did Labor do at the time? Labor chose not to inform Queenslanders until the issue was raised by paramedic and ambulance officer whistleblowers.

Mr Harper: What a load of rubbish.

Dr ROWAN: I hear the member for Thuringowa interjecting on that. The member for Thuringowa should understand that this is an important issue for Queenslanders. They do not like hearing the truth that in Queensland they are failing when it comes to hospital and health services. Whether that be in Thuringowa, in Cairns, down in the Redlands or right across Queensland, Queenslanders are crying out for action when it comes to resolving these issues.

The member for Thuringowa should listen to this. Paramedic hours lost has been soaring by 20 per cent to over 134,000 hours as a result of ramping. In the five years to July 2022, the total number of patients waiting longer than the clinically recommended time frames to see a specialist increased by 177 per cent. The fact that the Palaszczuk Labor government has not met statewide ambulance ramping targets in the past eight years is an absolute disgrace.

When it comes to all of these communities across Queensland there needs to be action when it comes to our health and hospital services. That is before we get to the crime crisis. As we know, crime has been running unabated in North Queensland. It has been affecting communities whether in Townsville, Cairns or Thuringowa. What has been happening up there over the last eight years? Car theft, break and enters and a range of other crimes have been committed. We have seen some terrible instances of crime down in the Redlands.

That is why communities are crying out for candidates. They are crying out for local champions. Cost-of-living pressures are skyrocketing as well. This Labor government is doing nothing about that. That is why these communities need community champions. It is why the LNP has had to select candidates early. We have candidates who have been selected on merit. These three women who have been selected will be outstanding representatives for their communities in this parliament and they will get the legislation, policies and framework implemented to deliver for their areas.