




Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

Record of Proceedings, 20 April 2023

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Gladstone, Maternity Services

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (2.36 pm): Queenslanders deserve regional and rural communities that are provided with the services they have paid for by the government of the day. The reason I am talking about this is because I have the honour of being the shadow minister for regional development. Since the Minister for Regional Development in this great state is from a town called Gladstone, which is supposedly the engine room of the Central Queensland economy, we would assume that that minister would do something about the regional development problems in his own patch. That is exactly what the minister said he would do over 43 weeks ago. He went on local ABC Radio and said, 'If maternity services aren't fixed in the next six months I'll resign.' Guess what? If he was pregnant he would be post term and the baby would be in serious trouble. I would suggest to this minister that his baby is cooked and so is his ministerial status. This minister must stand by his words and resign.

When I was in Gladstone three weeks ago it was exactly nine months—270 days—since this minister went on local ABC Radio and said if maternity services were not restored he would be gone. Guess what? The only way they can have a baby there is to have a caesar. I do not know whether this minister knows it, but new mums like Melina, Emily and Linda with whom I met did not want to be pushed into a caesar. One of them in particular is a 22-year-old who had moved to Gladstone to take a job as a heavy vehicle operator. She loves her job. She loves her husband. She is happy to be pregnant. She is young, fit and healthy. Her doctor from Brisbane said, 'You are a prime candidate to have a natural birth in the Gladstone Hospital. Guess what? She could not because women are not able to have a baby in Gladstone.

Here we have a young female who moved to Gladstone with her husband for one of these jobs and she cannot even have a baby there. I wonder what Twiggy Forrest thinks about his new plant there. How is he going to get his employees to move there if the local member of parliament, who happens to be the regional development minister, cannot even provide maternity services? Gladstone has over 60,000 people—

Mr BUTCHER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I think the member for Nanango is being seriously misleading. She knows full well that birthing services are now coming back to Gladstone. She continues to say that they are not.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): I will you pull you up there. Minister—

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: When, Minister? That is the question I would ask.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please resume your seat, member for Nanango.

Mr Butcher interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Gladstone, can you please stop interjecting? Your point of order was not a point of order.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It shows how out of touch the Palaszczuk government is. There are 60,000 people around that Gladstone area. What about if you are from Monto, Theodore, Biloela or Cracow? In any of those places, you cannot get medical services because the poor nurses in Rocky are at their wit's end with the number of births they are trying to deal with. It is about time the Palaszczuk government did something about regional birthing services.