




Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

Record of Proceedings, 13 September 2023

MOTION

Health Workers

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (4.44 pm): I want to start this speech by asking the member for Thuringowa, are you okay? That contribution and his anger was really quite concerning. I am being genuine in that. I hope you are okay.

In relation to this motion, obviously the health minister, after a couple of weeks in the job, is under a huge amount of pressure. We know exactly where what we have seen here today comes from. As the member for Mudgeeraba said, it was an audition. It was pretty obvious to us on this side that the health minister was set up. I cannot believe that she would have taken the call from whoever suggested the idea to do this motion where already half of it has been ruled out. It would have been Dr Miles. I support the amendment from the associate professor, the good doctor, the member for Moggill, when he said every part after the word 'community' should be ruled out because of course everyone in this House supports and thanks Queensland's hardworking frontline health workers for the care they provide for our community.

I want to give a massive shout-out to Jess at the Kingaroy Hospital who looked after me the other night. She did a fantastic job. She was really helpful. I did get a tetanus needle and my arm hurt more than my leg for some time afterwards. She is completely incredible. Those hardworking nurses at the Kingaroy Hospital are the ones who keep coming into my office and saying, 'Deb, this is how we need to fix the system.' That is exactly why I stand behind the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Broadwater, when he says we will value nurses, because we already value nurses. We will increase their pay, we will increase their conditions. Part of that is because they want to be listened to.

Mr Harper: You sacked them!

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order, member for Thuringowa.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: He might need a blood pressure tablet, I think.

Ms Boyd interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will take that interjection. Did the member for Pine Rivers just say she would recommend medication? I am not sure she is a health professional so I am not sure he should. I do know the good doctor, the associate professor, the member for Moggill, would possibly be more than happy to attend upon the member for Thuringowa.

What these nurses say to us is that they want to be listened to. The record of those opposite is absolutely abysmal. Let us look at some of these figures. What about the mums of the Callide electorate? For over five years—for 2,000 days—Chinchilla maternity has been on bypass. What about Biloela? After 384 days it is still on bypass. What about Gladstone? How many days was Gladstone on bypass—three hundred and thirty-nine days. Just like the good doctor, the member for Moggill, said, it

is still under pressure. The health minister can say we now have maternity back in Gladstone, but what about Chinchilla, Weipa, Cooktown, Biloela—and the list goes on? When we were in government we opened maternity services. We planned for new hospitals. We opened Beaudesert. We planned for the opening of those regional health services to get back to the bush just like all those brilliant hardworking regional nurses, allied health professionals and doctors.

A government member interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I completely take offence to that. My daughter Lucy is one of the hardest working nurses in the Queensland Health system and I am so immensely proud of her.

Mr Tantari: She should be paid properly.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: At least we paid the nurses, unlike the former and the current Labor government. They are still trying to take money off our nurses. The member for Hervey Bay knows the troubles at his local hospital. I will be talking about that a little later in another debate. The health minister has been set up and for some reason she is taking the fall.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before I call the next speaker, I will take some advice. Member for Nanango, during your contribution you made a statement to the effect that much of the motion had been ruled out. In fact, in my ruling I reserved any decision or judgement in relation to this motion. I give you the opportunity to correct the record.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I am happy to correct the record and I apologise, Mr Deputy Speaker. I was referring to the amended motion.