




Speech By
Laura Gerber

MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

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ADJOURNMENT

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Child Protection

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (7.24 pm): My community is demanding action. Madam Deputy Speaker Lui, from the outset I want to assure you that, as a former federal prosecutor who worked with Taskforce Argos prosecuting child exploitation offences, I will not be offending the sub judice rule with my contribution and that nothing I say refers to a matter currently before the courts.

My community is demanding that the state government take immediate action to fix the blue card system and implement national child safety measures. In 2017 the Palaszczuk government received a damning report from the QFCC into the blue card system. Eighty-one recommendations were made to fix Queensland's blue card system. After six long years, the Palaszczuk Labor government is yet to fully implement 53 of those 81 recommendations.

The blue card system has failed our community and it is failing our kids. It is not good enough that this government has had six years to fully implement those recommendations to protect our children. How much more time does it need? Now we find that the implementation is delayed even further, out to 2024-25.

Currumbin parents want to know that their children will be safe when they drop them off at a childcare centre. Childcare centres and childcare educators want to know that the system will do its job and catch predators. We see this government act swiftly on matters of its own interests. Why can it not act swiftly to fix the blue card system and protect our children?

It is not just the blue card system my community is calling for immediate action on; it is also the implementation of the national child safety recommendations. A damning new progress report has revealed that the Palaszczuk government has failed to implement critical child safety recommendations. Ninety-one remain outstanding, with no timeline. Some of these include introducing a reportable conduct scheme, where heads of institutions including childcare centres must notify an oversight body of a reportable allegation, conduct or conviction involving the institution's employees. These changes could have protected our children from predators. Parents and childcare workers trusted this state government to fix the failings of the blue card system. Instead, they have been fundamentally failed by this government.

My community is demanding immediate action. The government has had the reports for six long years and has failed to fully implement the recommendations. Members of the government have been sitting on their hands, because this government is more concerned with announcements than with protecting our children. They are able to act swiftly when it is about their own political interest, yet when we call on them to act swiftly to protect our children they are failing to act. My community is demanding this action now.