



Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

Record of Proceedings, 22 August 2023


APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation Bill

Health and Environment Committee, Report

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (4.55 pm): I thank the House for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Health and Environment Committee's budget estimates report. Committee members work hard to ensure that health care in Queensland is held to the highest standard, and I want to thank them all. I especially want to pay tribute to the committee chair, Aaron Harper MP, the member for Thuringowa.

Despite only being the health minister for a couple of months, I was proud to discuss the work being done by Queensland Health, our Queensland Ambulance Service, and our health and hospital services right across the state. Every day in Queensland Health over 6,100 people present to an emergency department; over 12,000 people receive care as an inpatient; 25,000 people receive community mental health care; almost 3,100 calls are made to triple 0 for an ambulance; and 127 babies are delivered every day in Queensland Health. Above all, there are 100,000 people working hard to look after all of us, caring for our kids, our brothers, our sisters, our parents, our grandparents, our friends and our loved ones. The people of Queensland Health are heroes in every sense of the word and deserve our gratitude and respect.

That is why it is beyond disappointing that the LNP again used estimates as an opportunity to attack, belittle and undermine our frontline staff. Instead of asking about the improvements that we have seen in elective surgery, they are more concerned with their cheap points. Instead of asking about the continued strong performance in specialist outpatient appointments, they talked over the top of senior public servants the entire time. Despite having a well-known publicised problem with women—surprise, surprise!—the party with just six women did not ask a single question about the gender pay gap, women's health or any other women's policy. Let's be frank: the pitiful, embarrassing show that the LNP—

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Pause the clock. The member for Mudgeeraba will cease her interjections.

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Mudgeeraba, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms FENTIMAN: Let's be frank: it was a pitiful show where they undermined health workers and public servants. If I were the member for Mudgeeraba, I would be very embarrassed that my boss felt the need to hover over my shoulder the entire time to make sure I did not muck it up.

The Leader of the Opposition went to two estimates committee hearings—his own with the Premier and the health committee. He and his advisers were so nervous about what the member for Mudgeeraba might do or say that he had to sit there and make sure she did not say anything embarrassing. Who could blame him! You would not want to risk her calling our frontline health workers 'duds' again or risk her calling herself a registered nurse even though her registration had lapsed like the estimates committee found she had done several times or—and this would be bad—risk her recycling last year's questions like when she read one of Rachel Nolan's old speeches. Do members remember that? She became a minister and she read the exact same speech word for word.

The truth is that the member for Mudgeeraba is a liability for the LNP, and they know it. That is why the Leader of the Opposition had to show up to make sure she did not stuff it up. It is the only explanation. Housing? 'No, I will leave that to my opposition spokesperson.' Youth justice? 'No, my opposition spokesperson has that.' The economy? Transport? Energy? Education? 'No, my front bench can handle that.' Health? 'Oh, my God, I'd better get in there!' Honestly, what an embarrassment to the member for Mudgeeraba. It is almost as embarrassing as the member for Glass House sitting there for hours without asking one question. The member for Glass House is paid over \$25,000 to sit on the Health and Environment Committee but he cannot be bothered to ask a single question about health policy. Does the Leader of the Opposition distrust him as much as he distrusts the member for Mudgeeraba?

Queenslanders know they cannot trust the LNP when it comes to health. They cannot trust the member for Mudgeeraba. They cannot trust the Leader of the Opposition. Queenslanders will never forget that both the member for Mudgeeraba and the member for Broadwater stood side by side with Campbell Newman. They sat around the cabinet table as thousands of frontline health workers were sacked. Only the Palaszczuk government is investing in our frontline workforce with our satellite hospitals—which those opposite still will not get behind even though their candidates are happy to show up for the open days to enjoy Queensland Health's hospitality. It is embarrassing and the LNP should hang their heads in shame.