



Speech By  
**Aaron Harper**


**MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA**

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Record of Proceedings, 23 May 2024

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENTS**

**Ambulance Service**

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.08 pm): I rise to back in our health minister, who has delivered more paramedics, nurses and doctors to Queensland than ever before. The rubbish claims the health minister has endured by the LNP opposite this week—

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Mr Deputy Speaker, we have a ruling from yourself and the member is directly now putting a positive spin on the health minister. Is it okay for the Labor Party to talk positively about the health minister but not the opposition?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Member for Kawana, I am going to warn you under the standing orders. As I am trying to address you and give a response to your point of order, you are pointing across the chamber and not putting your comments through the chair, so I am going to warn you as per the Speaker's general warning that was given either this morning or yesterday.

I am listening carefully to the contribution from the member for Thuringowa. I will listen carefully to the contribution of every member of this chamber, and I will apply the ruling I have given evenly and in a fair manner. The member for Thuringowa is giving generalised statements at this point. If he goes anywhere near the matters that have occurred in this chamber, in any direction, I will be requesting that he does not do that. If he continues I will sit him down.

**Mr HARPER:** I certainly will not be. I cop some jibes about my former career, 30 years as a paramedic—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr HARPER:** Get them out of the way. Seriously, I want to deliver a lesson to the Leader of the Opposition on what actually happens in the back of an ambulance. I say to the Leader of the Opposition that we have heard claims this week of people dying on ramps when in fact they have deteriorated in either the ED or ICU and passed away.

**Mr Hart:** Be careful.

**Mr HARPER:** I am very careful.

**Mr Hart:** Be careful.

**Mr HARPER:** I take that interjection. I know what happens in the back of an ambulance—I can speak with authority on that—and sometimes, tragically, people deteriorate. Sometimes they die at home, sometimes they pass away in the workplace and sometimes they pass away in transit despite everything that has been thrown at that patient to try to save them. It troubles me greatly when these deaths are used for cheap political pointsoring. I call it ambulance chasing, and I will define 'ambulance chasing': an ambulance chaser's No. 1 goal is to secure a client for the firm they represent through

manipulation and trickery. Employing ambulance-chasing methods is not only unethical but also illegal. I know what happens because of what I did for 30 years and it troubles me greatly when someone's tragic passing is dragged into this place for cheap political pointscore, because there are two groups affected—the patient's family because it is brought into this arena and the paramedics themselves.

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr HARPER:** I say to the Leader of the Opposition—I must have touched a nerve—that this is absolutely disgraceful because the paramedics themselves are also dragged into this. No-one wants to see a patient deteriorate. No-one wants to see a cardiac patient deteriorate in front of them despite their best efforts. No-one wants to see a multi-trauma patient deteriorate in front of them despite their best efforts. That has a direct effect on the hardworking paramedics of this state, and I will defend them every day. Those on the other side are people who have no idea what happens in the back of an ambulance. There is not a paramedic on that side who can talk with real experience. It is disgraceful conduct for the LNP to raise tragedies such as this in this House, and it should cease doing that. It is disgraceful, it affects the families and, above all, it affects the hardworking paramedics who do their best every day in this state.