




Speech By
Jennifer Howard

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

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MOTION

General Practitioners

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (5.27 pm): The member for Mudgeeraba says we have rocks in our head. The only explanation for this motion is that ‘they’ have rocks in their head. I say that for two reasons. First of all, this motion was brought to the House by the member for Nanango—not the shadow Treasurer, whose portfolio it would fall in—and, second of all, if it were implemented doctors would pay payroll tax. They would be paying more tax. It is based on a tax that does not exist, and if it were implemented all of our hardworking GPs would pay more tax.

What we hear in this House from those members opposite is that the LNP want to lower tax. They want to lower debt and they want to lower taxes. Is their elusive tax policy, which we keep hearing about but we have never seen, that people will be paying more tax? Is that their elusive policy? On 13 September 2022, the Leader of the Opposition told the *Courier-Mail*—

I’ve been very, very clear headed into the next election. We are going to have a detailed tax plan ...

This was in 2022. He said—

That is fair and reasonable for us as an opposition. ... four years is a pretty reasonable and upfront thing for an opposition to do ... Ahead of the next election, people will know our tax plan.

Honourable members interjected.

Ms HOWARD: I do not know. It is about 45 days until the election and we still have not heard anything about it. That is why we cannot trust the LNP. They will say one thing but they will do another. I am wondering if the member for Nanango has consulted with those elusive bodies the AMA Queensland and the RACGP, because they have a very different view to her on this. I found a quote from the President of the RACGP, Dr Nicole Higgins. She was reported as saying—

As a Queensland GP and practice owner, I know this is a win for GPs across Queensland and our patients. It is a clear signal that our state government recognises the value of general practice care in keeping Queenslanders healthy and out of hospital ...

She ended by saying—

I strongly urge other jurisdictions to follow Queensland and ensure GP services are not subject to extra payroll tax to provide certainty ...

Since then South Australia and the ACT have followed suit with us.

We have provided this amnesty at a cost in our budget of \$100 million per year. That means that medical practices are subject to the same payroll tax interpretations today as they were through the entirety of the Newman government, in which the Leader of the Opposition served. Back to our amnesty commitment, the Miles Labor government was the first state to make a ruling on the payroll tax for medical centres, as I have said. The public ruling provides clarity that, under normal business arrangements, patient fees, including the Medicare benefit and any out-of-pocket expenses, when they are paid directly via patient to a GP for that GP’s services, will not be subject to payroll tax.

The Miles Labor government backs our hardworking GPs. We are working to grow the GP front line. In June we announced that Queensland doctors are going to receive \$40,000 boosts to train in general practice under a new \$20 million Queensland government workforce attraction incentive scheme. We know that the health minister, Shannon Fentiman, travelled across the state talking to hospital and health services about our workforce attraction incentive. I went along to the one she held in the West Moreton Hospital and Health Service area. It was brilliant. She knew exactly what the needs were and she listened to our local health professionals. That is what is happening; our government is reflecting that we are listening and we are understanding what the issues are. The only patient focused revenue measure our government has implemented is the mental health levy, and that is making a huge difference across the state. It is a making a huge difference in every single electorate.

I oppose this motion. It is a foolish motion. If it was implemented, it would mean that GPs would be paying more tax. It is not what Queenslanders expect from their government. I am proud to be a part of a government that has implemented something groundbreaking and that will stand by our stance when it comes to this amnesty.