



Speech By
Jimmy Sullivan


MEMBER FOR STAFFORD

Record of Proceedings, 7 March 2024

HEALTH AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 2)

Resumed from 6 March (see p. 522), on motion of Ms Fentiman—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr SULLIVAN** (Stafford—ALP) (12.09 pm), continuing: I will resume my contribution, which will be short today. At adjournment yesterday, I was speaking about how fantastic it is that this bill provides patient ratios for midwives and nurses and extends that ratio to mums and bubs. Usually in this House I give thanks to the workers, doctors, nurses, cleaners and the wardies—everybody—at the Prince Charles Hospital. Today, I will talk about those at the RBWH. While it is inside Minister Grace's electorate by 200 metres, so many of those staff live and have kids at schools in my electorate. They are people whom I deal with on a weekly basis. I give a shout-out to them.

I was also thanking the member for Mount Ommaney and others for their kind words. They recognise that this also provides better support for bereaved parents or, to put it delicately, those who arrive at the hospital pregnant but drive away with an empty baby seat in the car. I want to personally thank the RBWH for the extraordinary support from their nurses, doctors, counsellors and others who have an ability to wrap their arms around people. I was also giving a shout-out to Kerry and her extraordinary voluntary team at Precious Wings who provide such service to bereaved parents when they need it most. I absolutely stand by the workers and the midwives in particular at the RBWH and compare that to those opposite, who are so blatantly hypocritical. They have never apologised for sacking 14,000 workers. In Metro North HHS alone they sacked 1,500 health workers, 750 of whom were nurses. It is unforgiveable, but we remember.

In terms of the other provisions of the bill relating to the termination of pregnancy, extending health care to the regions is important. That is recognition of the skills of our nurses and midwives across the state. I think it is really important. In terms of the history of that bill, I am happy to be on the record as a supporter. In my previous role behind the scenes I saw the extraordinary work that went on with the Queensland Law Reform Commission and with stakeholders. It was a very extensive process. I will reflect on it this way. The bill was introduced by the then attorney-general for good reasons, but the then health minister and now Premier had carriage of it through the House. I think that was a really symbolic move to show that this issue, whatever members' views on it, was being moved from one of criminality and law to one of health care. I think this bill continues that message and that is really important.

I also reflect on the contribution the member for Miller made yesterday because he made a good point. At the time there were three opposition members in the House who supported the government's moves. It will be really interesting—and I am not saying this provocatively, because I am very interested—to see what the members for Clayfield and Chatsworth do. The member for Currumbin was very happy to interject during the member for Miller's contribution without any self-reflection that her predecessor was one of those who had the courage of her convictions to vote the same way. Let's see what those three members do and let's see if they continue to stand by their convictions or whether they do what they did for treaty. Let's see if they have the courage of their convictions. I commend the bill to the House.