



Speech By  
**Ros Bates**

**MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA**

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## **APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**

### **APPROPRIATION BILL**

#### **Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)**

##### **Appropriation Bill**

##### **Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee, Report**

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (7.06 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee estimates report 2024. The estimates process is a vitally important one in our democracy. At its very core the process is about transparency, scrutiny and, dare I say, letting the light shine in. That does not always happen, though. It should, but it does not always happen. Enter the Minister for Health. In she came to the committee hearing with about a third of the hospital performance data that is normally published. There was no data on the performance of elective surgery across Queensland and no data on the waiting lists for those Queenslanders needing to see a specialist doctor. For the previous two years the health performance data has been formally released on the day of the estimates hearing. This year only a third of it was available to be scrutinised. Splitting it up in this way is unprecedented and the director-general said just as much throughout the course of the hearing. It is easy to see why the minister was not so keen to have those numbers out in the open. They have since been released and it has now been shown that Queensland has its longest elective surgery waiting list ever recorded: 62,000 patients. That is unprecedented.

That is no way to govern, but it is not a one-off. There is a penchant for avoiding scrutiny. I want to point out another example to the House detailing the shambolic and contemptuous way the Labor Party—those opposite—treat this important process. In a question on notice asked to the committee, opposition members asked for the amount of ambulance lost time between April and June. That metric, hidden in the shadows for many years, has only come to prominence throughout this term of government because of the opposition's pursuit of Queensland's health crisis. We started asking questions on notice for that figure and who could forget when the minister all of a sudden tried answering it in a different way earlier this year to try to muddy the waters? I table coverage of that sorry saga for the benefit of the House.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, dated 1 April 2024, titled 'Minister blasted for data' [1542](#).

When we asked the question for lost time ahead of the estimates hearing, this was the response we received—

Performance data for April to June 2024 will be released as part of the next quarterly data report.

Honourable members will see that response in prehearing question on notice No. 6. That response to that question on notice was shared by the committee secretariat at around 12.30 pm the day before estimates. Lo and behold on that same night around nine o'clock the performance data started getting uploaded to the website—without the information we requested, of course. That is downright tricky and sneaky and wrong. That is a blight on the parliamentary scrutiny which should be a hallmark of this process. That is a pathetic way to govern.

Is it any wonder that the people of Queensland are just absolutely fed up with the way those opposite operate? They treat this place like they own it. The level of hubris is outrageous. The actions we saw throughout the estimates hearing by those opposite are the actions of those who think they are above scrutiny—a blatant disregard for rules and processes and transparency—and that is the hallmark of this year's estimates committee. That is how Queensland is being run by those opposite, and that comes at a cost.

The cost is the Queensland health crisis and the crisis is having fatal consequences, with the Queensland Ambulance Service commissioner confirming during the committee hearing that Queenslanders are more likely to die from a heart attack now than 10 years ago because of deteriorating ambulance response times. That was a startling revelation to come from the hearing which proves that the Queensland health crisis is only getting worse under Labor. The survival rate of a heart attack unwitnessed by a paramedic has fallen to levels that are worse than the Anna Bligh era—I repeat: worse than the Anna Bligh era—despite all of the advancements in technology and medicine, despite the billions and billions of dollars of investment by those opposite, despite more paramedics and more ambulances. Despite all of that, health outcomes in Queensland are actually getting worse and in this case it is literally a matter of life and death, and it is not the fault of the health staff—the hardworking paramedics, the doctors, the nurses and the other allied health professionals; it is the fault of a tired, self-obsessed, desperate third-term Labor government that has completely lost its way.