




Speech By
Christopher Whiting

MEMBER FOR BANCROFT

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ADJOURNMENT

Health System

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (9.12 pm): I rise to talk about the spectre of health cuts that we are facing from this LNP government. During the election campaign, we heard the LNP say that there will be no cuts to Queensland Health and that Queenslanders had nothing to fear—nothing to see here. We can see now that they will do it just like they did it last time.

Let me tell members how this happens. In 2015, when I was doorknocking in North Lakes on one day I came across two small business owners. One supplied equipment for premmie babies in maternity wards. The other business was contracted to Queensland Health to supply laundry supplies. Both their small businesses were devastated because they were told by hospitals, 'Sorry, we have an order to cut the budget, and we are cutting what we get from you.' These businesses were devastated by these blind, Campbell Newman era cuts. These businesspeople were devastated and they never forgot.

What we are seeing is a similar style of things happening again. This time the LNP are trying to be sneakier, but Queensland businesses are now feeling the pain as the LNP brings the hospital expansion program to a screaming halt. That is one of the ways that we are facing cuts. Local contractors that I have talked to who work in the health construction area have told me that their businesses are now facing very uncertain times and that confidence in this sector has dropped remarkably. Their future work trajectory has evaporated because hospital construction has now ground to a halt. They are not hearing a thing from Queensland Health about what is going to happen. They are now facing a void. That is because the LNP has called a halt to the hospital expansion program. All these workers and all those businesses had plans and they are not hearing a thing about what hospital construction is happening in the future. Once again these are the sneaky cuts that we are seeing in the area of health from the LNP.

We have heard about cuts to the nurse-led clinics in Mount Gravatt and Brisbane—cuts to opening hours, after hours and on the weekends as well. Without these nurse-led clinics, more pressure is put on local emergency departments. They have cut the workforce incentive fund, and that puts pressure on hospitals in rural and regional areas when they find it hard to attract staff. We also heard stories about the eight-bed perinatal unit in Townsville, yet at the same time 2,000 more Queenslanders have been added to the elective surgery waiting list under the Crisafulli government—2,000 more Queenslanders are now on that list.

(Time expired)