




Speech By  
**Lance McCallum**

**MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA**

---

Record of Proceedings, 12 June 2025

### **HEALTH LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (3.59 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Health Legislation Amendment Bill. As has been mentioned by almost every speaker, this bill effectively does two things. First, in relation to our Hospital and Health Boards Act, it requires at least one member of each health and hospital board to be a clinician who is employed or engaged by the HHS itself for which the board is established. The second major thing that this bill does is it effects reforms to the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998 which expedites the forfeiture of seized vaping products and goods and enables the courts to order people convicted of an offence under the act pay reasonable costs incurred as a result of that offence. I will deal firstly with the amendments relating to the Hospital and Health Boards Act.

The fundamental premise associated with these amendments to HHS boards is based on an election commitment of the LNP government. We heard from the member for Moggill in his contribution where he referenced that and, indeed, in the committee report it specifically states that during the election campaign last year the now government committed to putting doctors, nurses and clinician staff back in charge of hospitals. That is what the member for Moggill was referring to.

However, what is not in the committee report and was not mentioned by the member for Moggill or, indeed, any other speaker that I am certainly aware of from the government benches in relation to this bill, is any recognition whatsoever that of the 16 HHSs that we currently have in Queensland, 13 of them currently have a person with a clinical background appointed to at least one of the top senior decision-making positions, meaning a chair, a deputy chair or health service chief executive. I think every member in this House would be united on the fundamental proposition that clinicians in a particular health area or region should be able to provide input and use their expertise and their knowledge of their region to deliver the services and make sure that they are the best services being delivered for that particular region. As a fundamental principle I think that everybody agrees on that.

When it comes to what the reforms in this legislation are about, I think it is very important that we do start from what is currently happening out in our HHSs. There is an incredibly high amount of representation from local clinicians currently in 13 of the 16 HHSs in Queensland. Let us get that on the record and let us have a little bit of a factual basis when it comes to the broader context of the reforms that are contained in this bill where it requires at least one person in each of the 16 HHSs to be a clinician from that particular HHS.

The difficulty with the way that the proposition that we would all agree on is being implemented in this bill is that it does give rise to situations where there will be complex conflicts of management. The bill is silent on any framework on how those conflicts of interest could and should be managed. This is an issue that received quite a lot of attention throughout the committee's inquiry into the bill. Indeed, the Integrity Commissioner made a submission which pointed out several problems with the model that is contained in this bill that has been brought forward by this government. Frankly, it does not surprise me that the Crisafulli LNP government would have a problem and stuff up bringing forward reforms that require any level of integrity.

The issue with what is proposed in this bill is that conflicts of interest could arise in matters which relate to their employee interests, such as their role in their work area or unit. Put in plain terms, what that means is if you are an oncologist who is working in an HHS and you are put on the board, you would have to recuse yourself of any consideration around any papers or any matters that come to the board in relation to oncology. Probably what is not immediately thought of is the corollary of that person's role as an employee of the HHS and whether or not the chief executive of the HHS would treat that board member the same knowing that they are a board member as the person that they report to. If you are a clinician and you report to your CEO, the Integrity Commissioner has raised the issue that that particular employee might not be treated in the same way that the CEO would treat another employee who is not a board member. That is an important point.

Nothing in this bill does anything to shed a light or provide any systems or framework for how these complex conflicts of interest would be managed. That is just for employees of the HHS. It does not even take into consideration that clinicians may also have private interests and practise in a private capacity in that area. They might be compromised and conflicted as an employee for the HHS and then they might also have conflicts of interest of a commercial manner in their private capacity if they are practising privately in the region that is covered by the HHS and there are matters that come up before the board in relation to budgets or contracts, et cetera.

Time has gotten away from me and I do want to finish off my contribution on HHSs by acknowledging the incredible work of the West Moreton Hospital and Health Service and the hardworking board members. We have a good crew on the board who do an amazing job, as does every single person who works for West Moreton Health who takes care of our community when we need it in fantastic local facilities like the Ipswich Hospital, which has been upgraded several times by Labor, and the stage 2 billion dollar expansion that is underway at the moment which will be overseen by the HHS board and, indeed, other facilities in West Moreton such as the satellite health centre down in South Ripley in our Bundamba community which itself has a 90-bed subacute facility that is under construction right now, once again under the purview of the West Moreton Hospital and Health Service. These are all wonderful facilities full of dedicated, passionate people caring for our community and proudly delivered by Labor.