




Speech By
Hon. Leeanne Enoch

MEMBER FOR ALGESTER

Record of Proceedings, 27 August 2025

MOTION

Chief Health Officer, Appointment

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (5.50 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition, because it cuts to the very core of public trust and integrity in government and because of people like Drune from my electorate of Algester who today very bravely shared the deeply tragic story of the death of her brother Rhiike after a number of failures by Queensland Health. Before the election the now Premier talked a big game about integrity. He repeatedly said that what he says is what he means. He promised Queenslanders that under his leadership appointments would be based on merit, not mateship, and that the days of political interference in the Public Service would be over. What have we seen since the election? We are not even a year into its term, yet this government is embroiled in another integrity scandal involving the appointment of a senior public servant.

For those following along at home, here is a recap of the recent debacle surrounding the appointment of the Chief Health Officer. A clear merit-based selection process to appoint Queensland's next Chief Health Officer was conducted. An independent selection panel did its job and found that Dr Krispin Hajkowicz was the best person for the role. He was told of his success. The health minister informally endorsed him. Some media outlets reported that Dr Hajkowicz had even had his official photos taken. Then, all of a sudden, the Premier, by his own admission, reached into the process and blocked the appointment. The Premier confirmed in this place that he had made that decision about the Public Service position, stating it was all because the position is a forward-facing one and Dr Hajkowicz had in the past stepped down from the same position. What? Has the Premier forgotten that a number of his own frontbench, who also hold forward-facing positions, have stepped down from their portfolio responsibilities in the past? Obviously that fact did not stop them from being appointed to his cabinet. Seriously, how are the double standards!

Let's be absolutely clear: the Chief Health Officer is not a political appointment; it is a Public Service appointment made by the chief executive of Queensland Health. The role is meant to be independent of political meddling. That safeguard exists precisely so that when the health of Queenslanders is on the line decisions are made by doctors and health professionals, not by politicians or political operatives protecting their own interests.

The selection panel had determined, after taking everything into account, that Dr Hajkowicz was the most suitable candidate. By every rule, every standard and every principle of integrity he should have been appointed, but this Premier and allegedly at least one other government minister thought they knew better. Before the election, the Premier stood in front of the cameras and claimed he would restore trust. Instead, he has trampled all over trust in Queensland. He claimed he would let the experts do their jobs, and now he has not only blocked the experts who sat on the selection panel and the expert who is the director-general of Queensland Health but also blocked the very expert selected to be Queensland's next Chief Health Officer. That is why this motion matters. It acknowledges the

legitimacy of the independent selection panel's decision. It demands transparency by ordering the release of all relevant documents, and it seeks accountability by referring this political interference to the health committee.

Queenslanders, like Drune and her brother, deserve a government that respects process. They deserve a government that values expertise. They deserve a government that tells the truth and keeps its promises. Instead, they have a Premier who said one thing before the election and now does the complete opposite in government. We have seen this over and over again from this Premier and his government. When he said that he would not be interfering in Public Service appointments, we thought it was interesting and that maybe he was trying to be a little bit different from Campbell Newman. All we have seen, though, is he is being exactly like Campbell Newman, but in such a guarded and sneaky way. He is more calculated and more slippery. Queenslanders are on to it.

This is a betrayal of trust. It is a betrayal of integrity. It is a betrayal of every Queenslander who believed David Crisafulli when he promised that he would do politics differently. For those reasons I commend this motion as put by the Leader of the Opposition to the House and, of course, condemn this government for its latest integrity scandal.