



Speech By
Nikki Boyd

MEMBER FOR PINE RIVERS

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MOTION

Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (5.52 pm): Some 45 of the state's 77 councils were disaster activated in the first month of this year, but they were not the only ones. The minister for community recovery and the Minister for Disaster Recovery were both activated too—the disaster dames. They may not hold a hose, but skipping out from natural disasters in peak season for a long break is their jam—one dame being brazen enough to jaunt across the globe to 'bless the rains down in Africa' instead of in Queensland.

'Not only is it a bad look; it is utterly irresponsible' was a quote from a *Sunrise* panel, as the abandonment was beamed into every lounge room in the nation. Commentators went on to call the member for Whitsunday's actions incredibly deceptive. I reflect fondly on the days when the member for Whitsunday was the self-appointed community recovery minister—long before she was ever assigned the role. Back in those honeymoon days, one dame loved to overreach and the other underreach.

Eventually, we saw a reshuffle and the surrogate got her prize. In fact, we sat through an entire sitting week with the demoted member for Warrego awkwardly muted. The gig was up when the House rose and the *Gazette* landed. There was no updating of the House, just deception—a deception that comes all too often, all too naturally. We are left to ponder what went so wrong—not with the member for Warrego as that is obvious. How did the member for Whitsunday go from a minister who could not stay in her own lane to a minister who could not stay on the same continent? She wanted it so badly and discarded it almost instantly.

The LNP crows that there is no daylight between response and recovery. There is an international dateline. Approved by the Premier was the annual leave for the Minister for Disaster Recovery for the second year in a row in the thick of disaster season—one of the longest ministerial leave periods gazetted. When natural disaster struck again, the minister was working from her office in Warrego. So remote was she that a spokesperson needed to provide media comment rather than the minister herself. The missing minister finally made an, albeit brief, lacklustre appearance. It beggars belief that, within the course of a week of this public outcry and embarrassment, the member for Whitsunday thought it was fine and dandy to pack up her gear and forge ahead with her three weeks annual leave on an African safari—'hakuna matata'.

An already natural disaster impacted state saw Tropical Cyclone Koji bear down in, amongst other locations, the electorate of Whitsunday. Yesterday, the devastation of that event was addressed by the members for Traeger, Rockhampton and Keppel. Why has the member for Whitsunday not updated the House? What is the extent to which Queenslanders have been impacted? What supports

are available for them and their families? There is an African saying 'well done is better than well said'. This is a minister who proves day to day that she cannot manage the well done. Deflection, deception and denial is the member for Whitsunday's version of well said.

The 'incredibly deceptive' assessment of *Sunrise* is spot on. There is real anger around that and it relates to the guise of support that the member for Whitsunday laid on thick—misleading of her presence. It is deception that is insulting, most of all to our first responders—those who put themselves in harm's way to protect us, to serve us, to save us. The member for Whitsunday was so comfortable on safari, hanging out in the hide, that even upon her return the media could not find her. It took more than a month from the start of her leave for her to front up to the media. When she finally put down the ranger's coffee, ticked off the big five, the little five and the ugly five and the sundowners were a distant memory, what did she have to say?

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Ms BOYD: I take the interjection from the member for Nanango.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Nanango, you were on a warning. You can leave the chamber for a period of one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Nanango withdrew from the chamber at 5.56 pm.

Ms BOYD: 'I take my job and role very seriously,' she said. 'I want to be fit, healthy and alert to be able to give it my all.' 'Part of that was being able to take a break,' she said. The minister's privilege and entitlement oozes from her words.

Queenslanders with flooded homes are not given a break. Farmers who have lost their livelihoods are not given a break. Abandoned and abused children are not given a break. Our SES volunteers, who are not paid hundreds of thousands of dollars to show up, still showed up in this time of crisis. This is how they spend their holidays—serving the community for free. We all deserve a better standard than what the member for Whitsunday is offering. People experiencing the worst days of their lives do not want someone who is pretending to be here. They need someone who is actually here.