




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

Record of Proceedings, 29 April 2025

MOTION

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 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (11.45 am): I rise to speak on the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. After that contribution it really has become clear to me. The deputy leader spoke about why the Premier does not like getting up and answering questions from the media. Perhaps he is hiding from scrutiny, but I do not think that is it. I do not think the Deputy Premier will let him. He has to be the star of the show. That is why the Premier is sitting there not contributing to this debate. It is all about the Deputy Premier. Everyone knows—it is the talk of the Public Service—that the Deputy Premier is running the show. He is in charge. After that performance, it has become pretty clear that he is calling the shots.

I want to ask the Premier, who did not contribute to this debate, three things about this so-called Hospital Rescue Plan: how are you going to deliver this, for how much and by when? The people of Queensland just want to know when they are getting the hospital beds those opposite promised by 2028. The health minister released a report that says 'we're delaying all of these projects, all of these beds'. Every single one of the hospital expansion projects and the three new hospitals are indefinitely delayed.

I note that the Deputy Premier criticised the Leader of the Opposition for quoting the Australian Contractors Association, but they are the contractors building these hospitals. They are the ones who matter. Those opposite say, 'We want to consult with industry. We want to be deliberative,' but the people who are building these hospitals have urged the government to get on with this at speed. Do you know why? The construction is already underway—delivered by Labor—and they have completely reorganised their businesses to deliver these projects. The Australian Contractors Association also said, 'ACA is calling for these recommendations to be implemented in a way'—Mr Speaker, I do want to be heard here—that minimises delay and disruption.'

The Australian Contractors Association, the big business that is building these hospitals, is saying there are delays and disruptions, and that is exactly what we have been saying. These companies have reorganised their workforce but they have all been sent home from Townsville. The good people of Townsville, who elected LNP members, are now left without construction happening on their hospital.

It is not just complete delay and complete breaking of a promise when it comes to health infrastructure. What else have they broken their promises on in health? What about the Workforce Attraction Incentive Scheme? How are they going to get people to work in these new hospitals when they have slashed the scheme? They have slashed the operating hours of nurse-led clinics. Those clinics that are supposed to be open on weekends and after hours for working mums and dads to get their kids seen are now closed on weekends.

What about the health minister who refuses to answer questions about women's health? He will answer questions about elective surgery and colonoscopies, but when it comes to answering questions about women's health that is too burdensome. That is what the health minister had to say. We have all heard the rumours about how the women's health package—a billion dollars delivered by the Labor government—is on the chopping block. Those policy officers in the department are so concerned about their future.

The fact is that Queenslanders need these beds and they need them by 2028. That is what Queenslanders voted for when they voted for that Premier who stood up and told them he would deliver the beds by 2028. It is interesting that the health minister runs around Queensland taking credit for some of the health projects that, thank God, were too close to completion for him to delay. He has been up to the mental health facility in Cairns claiming credit, which was delivered by Labor. He has been down to the Gold Coast at the mental health unit claiming credit, which was delivered by Labor. He has been to the Tara Hospital, a wonderful project, which was delivered by Labor. He has even been to the Hervey Bay modular ward, with 24 new beds delivered by Labor. He is absolutely happy to take credit for those projects—thankfully, they were too close to completion—because all across Queensland, all of those other beds are now delayed.