



Speech By
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MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Racing Industry

 **Mrs STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (2.53 pm): Queensland's racing industry is saying enough is enough as their anger spills into the media and letters from respected racing advocates are circulating across the state. I table four letters from Ian McCauley OAM to the minister and the Premier. As of this morning, none of them have received direct responses.

Tabled paper: Correspondence, various dates, from Mr Ian McCauley OAM to the Minister for Sport and Racing, Hon. Bill Byrne, and the Premier and Minister for the Arts, Hon. Annastacia Palaszczuk, regarding Racing Queensland [\[1796\]](#).

Inertia and arrogance by this minister, the Premier and this government have placed an enormous and unnecessary strain upon people's livelihoods. Does this minister not get what country racing means to country folk? Does he not care at all? If he did, he would have included them in discussions about their future. Instead, only two out of nine face-to-face forums were held outside Brisbane. They were in Cairns and Mackay. There were none west of the dividing range where the majority of country race meets are held, showing utter contempt for those living in the outback and rural towns. This minister has declared Queensland is 86 per cent drought affected and now plans to rip country racing away from them. How heartless is that? No wonder Minister Byrne is being called the Grinch before Christmas.

Racing media in particular are taking the blowtorch to this minister and this Palaszczuk Labor government. They can see disgraceful politics being played out with no concern for individuals or this proud industry. Already RadioTAB's David Fowler, ABC's Steve Austin, retiring race caller Alan Thomas, the *Courier-Mail's* Nathan Exelby, the *Sunday Mail's* Michael Madigan and country papers and radio have exposed the plight of this industry left headless, leaderless and rudderless for six months. I want to thank them for giving a voice to the many thousands of people who rely on racing for their livelihoods and are deeply fearful of this government's intentions to slash and burn their industry.

An article in the *Courier-Mail* on 27 November headed 'Racing stalls in a vacuum' highlights the growing frustration of industry leaders like Rob Heathcote, trainer of Queensland star Buffering, and former champion jockey, now trainer Chris Munce at this government's crippling inaction that is causing confidence to plummet and other states to pick up our business. Heathcote said—

It's tragic that we as an industry, leading into the critical sales season are left in limbo.

Munce said that Queensland was suffering because it did not have an autonomous administration fighting for its interests—'While you have people running a business they have no interest or knowledge of, it just continues to decline'.

Failure to release a tracking sustainability plan—or any plan for that matter—will have long-term effects on Queensland's racing industry, but this minister hides away. My records reveal that he has not even put out a release on racing since 16 July, yet he puts them out on agriculture all the time. I call on the minister to make public the contents of Ian Hall's report and recommendations on the tracking sustainability plan and to guarantee that there will be broader consultation with industry before any of them are implemented.