



Speech By
Jann Stuckey

MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Koalas; Currumbin Wildlife Hospital

 **Mrs STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (2.37 pm): My support and advocacy for wildlife and in particular our koala population is well recognised. It really makes my blood boil to hear this Labor government bleating about how much it cares about our wildlife when they do nothing about it. Residents and Currumbin Wildlife Hospital are reporting an increase in koala injuries and deaths, but the Palaszczuk Labor government are turning a deaf ear.

Latest figures show the hospital is treating more than 10,000 animals per year, and an increasing number of those are koalas. During a recent visit to the hospital senior vet Dr Michael Pyne warned that we are coming into koala trauma season. Just that morning four koalas were brought in and as we were leaving it was mentioned another four injured koalas were on their way. I am calling on the Palaszczuk government to set up a koala register to keep up-to-date data as this much loved Australian native marsupial faces more challenges to its survival.

Urgent action is required if we are to save our koalas. That is why a register to document koala injuries and deaths in real time is desperately needed. If the Palaszczuk Labor government are to be believed that they are serious about koala protection, they would immediately set up a register but the environment minister does not care.

I was appalled at the reply I received to a question on notice I asked the minister in June about whether her department undertakes any coordinated documentation of wildlife injuries and deaths. Minister Leeanne Enoch used the excuse that it would be 'impractical' to collect this data, stating her department is able to seek data from wildlife rescue and recovery services when necessary.

Given the regular reports in the media about the future security of our koalas on the Gold Coast, one would expect the Palaszczuk government to be doing more. I know that the Currumbin Wildlife Hospital keeps records, but there should be a central register for each region. I understand a specific koala database program has been designed and has been ready to go for some time but has not been implemented. This program, Koala Base, shows where koalas are being hit by cars on the Gold Coast, but it seems the minister does not want people to know.

Not only did the Minister for Transport dismiss our petitions to slow vehicle speeds through Tallebudgera, where over a dozen koala fatalities occurred in a matter of months, but the Minister for Environment sat on the Koala expert panel's report for nearly 12 months. Labor just do not care. They are all talk and no action.

While I am on my feet, I would like to put a call out for old wetsuits. The animal hospital is cutting them up to make anaesthetic masks to use in operations on oddly shaped animals. Wetsuit material is great as it stretches but does not tear. Please take your old wetsuits into the hospital where they will help save lives. If you have not visited the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary for a while, head down and visit the amazing Lost Valley exhibit and meet many other wonderful creatures.

In the few seconds I have left, I would like to wish every senior in Queensland and Australia an extremely happy and life-lengthening Seniors Week.