



Speech By  
**Dr Christian Rowan**


**MEMBER FOR MOGGILL**

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Record of Proceedings, 5 February 2020

**MOTION**

**Coronavirus**

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (12.10 pm): I rise to address the motion moved by the Minister for State Development, the member for Woodridge. This is a very serious public health issue. We know that a global health emergency was declared by the World Health Organization on 31 January. Novel coronavirus 2019, otherwise known as nCoV, is a very serious issue. As other speakers have done, I offer my sympathies to those who have lost their lives and to their families. We know that there are many people around the world who continue to endure suffering as a result of this infectious disease. There are three confirmed cases here in Queensland.

The public health emergency was declared in Queensland with a public health emergency order published in the *Government Gazette* on 31 January 2020. As we know, this is a rapidly-evolving situation, not only here in Queensland but also across Australia and internationally. There are significant impacts to individual patients and there are also economic impacts. They will be felt in Queensland, Australia and internationally. The last thing that we in Queensland need is politicisation of this issue. It is shameful that Labor, the Premier and various Palaszczuk Labor government ministers are trying to politicise this issue for cheap political gain. We will probably see more and more such motions related to various issues leading up to the state election to be held later this year, on 31 October. We need to assure Queenslanders that it is safe to go about their daily lives. There must be calm but also vigilance.

This parliament needs to show calm and respectful leadership—not scaremongering or whipping up fear—and ensure that our various governments and agencies work together collaboratively and constructively to ensure it is addressed not only in Queensland but also right across Australia.

I note that at paragraph 1(d) of the motion there is some reference to clinical information. I want to reference some of that, because as part of this debate it is important to put that on the record. People need to self-isolate or remain at home if they left Hubei province fewer than 14 days ago until 14 days after they left Hubei, have been in close contact with a proven case until 14 days after the proven case became unwell, or left or transited through mainland China on or after 1 February 2020 until 14 days after leaving China.

I raise that because it is important that, if Queenslanders or tourists are concerned or have clinical symptoms such as fever, cough, headaches or a sore throat, they seek immediate medical review by attending a general practitioner or attending one of the fever clinics established, including the one at the Gold Coast University Hospital or at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital. The community has a big part to play in preventing the spread of the novel coronavirus. Just like the flu season, we need to ensure good hand hygiene and stay one metre away from anyone sneezing or coughing.

As I said earlier, I note in the motion that the Labor government is attempting to politicise this issue and blame the federal government. The federal Morrison LNP coalition government, the federal health minister, Greg Hunt, and the federal Minister for Home Affairs, Peter Dutton, are doing a

tremendous job in coordinating our national response. Queensland is the only state jurisdiction that is not working constructively. We see that today in terms of the motion being moved. We do not see this in other state jurisdictions around Australia.

On 1 February 2020 the Prime Minister announced new border control measures and travel advice. The federal government continues to work very hard to ensure this disease does not spread within our borders. Labor claims that it did not receive passenger information from affected flights but, in fact, this information was provided the day prior.

The motion also calls on the Prime Minister to declare this global health emergency a natural disaster under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements, but currently such disasters do not qualify under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. Yes, we need a national coordinated response, but we know that Labor in Queensland is inept at managing its finances. There are dire economic circumstances here in Queensland because of the Palaszczuk Labor government's failure. There is higher debt and higher unemployment, and significant bankruptcies are taking place. The Palaszczuk Labor government needs to take heed of its economic responsibilities and ensure it invests in a state government assistance package. The LNP has called upon the Palaszczuk Labor government—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Whiting): Members for South Brisbane and McConnel, I caution you against quarrelling across the chamber.

**Dr ROWAN:** The state government needs to act by allocating a state government assistance package. The Premier should stop playing politics and stop blaming Canberra. That would be the right thing to do by Queenslanders.