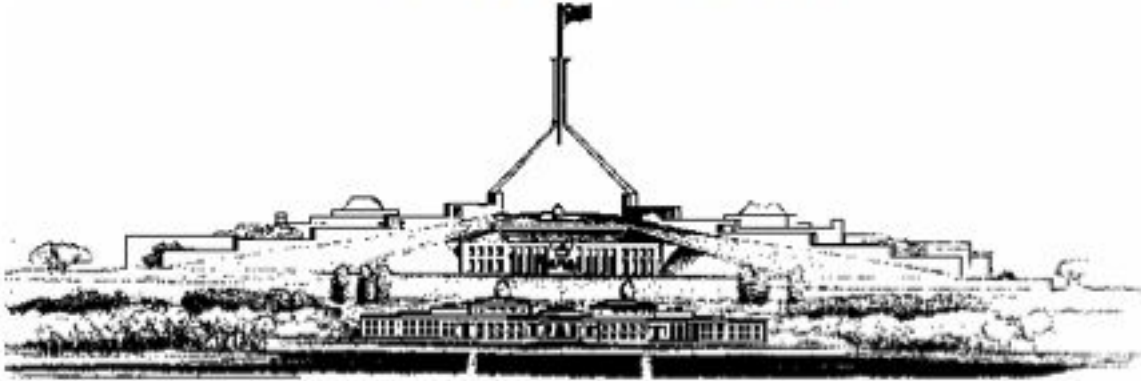




COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PROOF

Federation Chamber

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Fairfax Electorate: Bloomhill Cancer Care

SPEECH

Thursday, 7 September 2017

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

Date	Thursday, 7 September 2017	Source	House
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Questioner		Responder	
Speaker	O'Brien, Ted, MP	Question No.	

Mr TED O'BRIEN (Fairfax) (10:21): Bloomhill Cancer Care has been operating in Buderim on the Sunshine Coast now for 20 years. For 20 years they have been helping to care for and support people who are suffering from cancer. Everybody in this chamber—indeed, everybody in the House—knows people and has been touched by people who have struggled with cancer. Bloomhill, up on the Sunshine Coast, for 20 years has operated as a not-for-profit charity, providing support and care for so many citizens, not just of our region, but of Queensland. However, they've been challenged because it is not easy running an organisation with nearly 50 staff and nearly 500 volunteers. They don't get ongoing government funding.

Yet there's an opportunity, and that's why I wanted to stand in the chamber today. The opportunity is this: last week, we had the Minister for Health, Greg Hunt, up on the Sunshine Coast with us. We visited Bloomhill. The minister, like anybody who visits Bloomhill, was blown away by the good work they do. To solve their financial issue, to ensure they have ongoing sustainability—right now, they're relying on their op shops and generous philanthropic donations—to go beyond that and to give them true financial sustainability, the Commonwealth has offered something to the state government of Queensland.

Last week, the federal health minister confirmed that the remaining 15 medical places to enable a medical school to be established on the Sunshine Coast would be granted. Half of those places would be paid for by the Queensland state government—that's been their offer. Instead, the federal government has said to the Queensland state government: 'Don't give us that \$165,000 a year. Don't give us that money. Don't alleviate the Commonwealth. Give that money instead to Bloomhill. It's Bloomhill that needs the financial support.' What I'm calling for today is for the Queensland state government to look beyond metro Brisbane. Look beyond Brisbane and look at the regions and the Sunshine Coast. Here we have an opportunity to fund Bloomhill Cancer Care at a net zero cost to the state government if they only take up the Commonwealth's offer. Let's help Bloomhill because they're helping our citizens and they're helping the state of Queensland.