

MI137411 & MI137413
MO: H/06/03559 & H/06/03558

Mr Neil Laurie MP
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letters dated 20 and 21 April 2006 on behalf of M/s J Killer, regarding petitions received by the Queensland Legislative Assembly No. 584-05 and 641-06. I understand the petitioners are requesting the House to call on the current Labour Government to commit to maintain Queensland's free hospital system and scrap plans for the implementation of levies and means testing for Queensland patients.

I am pleased to advise that the Honourable Peter Beattie MP, Premier, and I announced on 29 March 2006 that the public hospital system will remain free for all Queenslanders, regardless of their income or age. The Government has ruled out introducing co-payments and means testing for public patients.

There is no doubt, that the Queensland health system is facing many challenges, including meeting the needs of a growing and ageing population, responding to rapid advances in technology, managing the growing prevalence of chronic and complex conditions and meeting the ever increasing costs of providing health care. The Government faces further challenges in delivering health services in a large decentralised state.

In light of these circumstances the Government established the Queensland Health Economist Review to investigate options to increase revenue from the services Queensland Health provides. The review examined the implications of introducing means testing and co-payments for specified services. After considering the report the Government believes we can build the best health system in Australia without those measures.

Should you have any queries regarding my advice to you, Mr Stuart Dignam, Senior Policy Advisor, will be pleased to assist you and can be contacted on telephone (07) 3234 1191.

Yours sincerely

STEPHEN ROBERTSON MP