Coronavirus

SPEECH

Monday, 2 March 2020
Mr JOYCE (New England) (16:16): The welfare of the people is to be the highest law—anyway, that's what Cicero said, or 'Kikkero', as my Latin teacher would correct me—and obviously the welfare of the people is best represented at this point in time by a studious approach to how we deal with COVID-19: coronavirus. I want to make sure we do everything in planning, not to basically hyperventilate or make it sensationalist but to make sure we plan. In planning we must keep in mind Indigenous communities and how we are going to manage COVID-19 if it gets into Indigenous communities, and also small regional towns and villages that are without medical support. Many of these villages don't even have a policeman, let alone a hospital or a doctor.

We have to plan for this, and we must also in this building be an example of some of the minor protection mechanisms to deal with the spread of the virus. I believe that in this building we need to have sanitary dispensers so that people, as they do in the hospitals, can keep cleaning their hands so we don't spread it by touch. I believe that in this building we have to make sure that we get some of the protocols right—even how you sneeze. You don't sneeze into your hands; you sneeze into the corner of your elbow so you don't spread the disease by touching. We have to make sure that our capacity to sanitise and disinfect balustrades is picked up. We in this building must be an example of some of the protection mechanisms for other people in other buildings.