




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Arts Sector

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (2.06 pm): Queensland's arts and cultural sector is facing many challenges given the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic. With shows, events and performances having had to be cancelled due to necessary government enforced public health restrictions, our arts sector requires every bit of assistance the Palaszczuk state Labor government should, and must, provide. The practical aspects of how venues will operate into the future with social distancing measures and how they can operate safely from a community health perspective is a significant challenge. This will require detailed consideration and planning with respect to the physical aspects of holding events and hosting performances as well as the important aspect of economic viability given the required reduction in seating capacity to meet public health requirements.

There is also the critical matter of casual employees and skilled workers at both QPAC and the Queensland government's museums and art galleries. The Queensland state Labor government is abandoning these skilled creative industries workers. These casual workers were all employed until the end of April 2020 under the state Labor government's pandemic leave arrangements, whereby pre-existing shifts were honoured throughout that month. However, it appears that, moving forward, no more additional support is being made available by the Palaszczuk state Labor government. This is simply not good enough.

For a political party and government that claims to be all about jobs and workers, this is extremely hypocritical and disappointing. The loss of such workers will be damaging for Queensland's arts and creative industries sector and its long-term viability. The economic, social and artistic implications will be immense for many years to come. The depth of corporate knowledge and the skills base that has been and will be lost has been devastating and will be a challenge for rebuilding the vibrancy of our arts and cultural sector once the COVID-19 pandemic has eased. There will also be a huge ripple effect across Queensland's performing arts and creative industries more broadly, including in rural and regional Queensland.

I call upon the Palaszczuk state Labor government and the Labor Minister for the Arts to step up and support these workers. These workers need support and it is the right thing to do. The Palaszczuk state Labor government always likes to blame Canberra and the federal Morrison coalition government, but it is important that they take their core responsibilities as a state jurisdiction seriously and support workers here in Queensland.

Rapidly the Palaszczuk state Labor government has turned the current health crisis into an economic crisis in Queensland. Labor is failing to protect jobs, let alone create jobs. Under the Palaszczuk Labor government, and well before the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, unemployment in Queensland has either been the highest or the second highest of any state jurisdiction. Business confidence under Labor has been the lowest of any state in Australia. Labor has no plan for infrastructure spending let alone a credible plan and pathway to economic recovery in Queensland.

It is only a Liberal National Party government that is able to get Queensland working again. Only the Liberal National Party will deliver infrastructure to bust traffic congestion, improve school and classroom facilities, ease cost-of-living pressures, provide better health and education services and protect our environment not only in the electorate of Moggill but right across Queensland.