



Speech by

Hon. J. ELDER

MEMBER FOR CAPALABA

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Business Headquarters

Hon. J. P. ELDER (Capalaba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development and Minister for Trade) (9.41 a.m.), by leave: The Beattie Government's determination to make Queensland the Smart State is fast becoming a reality, with leading industry players choosing to locate operations in this State. These companies bring a number of important factors to the State. Firstly, there is the key objective— jobs. The types of jobs created are well-paid and skilled positions. This leads to the State becoming known as a technological hub and, in turn, this attracts further business. Since coming to Government in July 1998, the number of high-tech companies that have come to the State makes an impressive list. Global computer giant IBM has established an Asia-Pacific call centre. US software supplier Saville Systems, Indis Industries and Computer Storage Group UTL/Quantum are among some of the headline companies. The reasons given by these companies for their move to Queensland include political stability, competitive leasing and property costs, a skilled work force, both technically and in foreign languages, an attractive climate and the cost of living compared with that in southern capitals.

However, recent research by the respected property group PRD Realty clearly demonstrates the success of Queensland becoming a high-tech centre. The research found that high tech was emerging as one of the fastest growing tenancy sectors in Brisbane, climbing from 3,764 square metres just two years ago to 17,235 square metres last year. In the first six months of this year, IT tenants committed to 16,960 square metres— more than 22% of the total space leased. In late September I had the pleasure of opening the new premises of a world leader in design and manufacture of microwave radiofrequency components, that is, Filtronic Comtek, at Murarrie. The company, which is a wholly owned subsidiary of UK-based Filtronic, came to Australia just four years ago. The Queensland Government provided assistance to the Australian company under the Queensland Industry Assistance Scheme and already more than 50 high-technology jobs have been created, and the Australian operation services the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. From small beginnings, Filtronic now employs 100 staff.

Recently, Australia's second largest pay television provider, Austar Entertainment, confirmed Queensland as its principal base of operation when it announced that it would employ a further 1,000 people in the next five years at the purpose-built complex at Robina. The Austar decision followed assistance provided by both the State Government and the Gold Coast City Council. It is evident from this that the Beattie Government has worked and is working with business to build and broaden the State's commercial base and the State's economy. The job dividends in this industry are mounting significantly.
