



Speech by

**JULIE ATTWOOD**

**MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY**

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Hansard 14 April 1999

### **SMALL BUSINESS**

**Mrs ATTWOOD** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (10.19 a.m.): On being elected as the member for Mount Ommaney, I became the patron of the Centenary Chamber of Commerce. Chambers of commerce have long believed that only conservative Governments can be caretakers of the needs of small business. That has never been the case. The conservatives look after only themselves and big business; they do not look after small business.

I invited the members of the Centenary Chamber of Commerce to take part in a working party which reported directly to the Minister. Only a few responded. I had put this down to a lack of interest or a lack of time. However, on reflection, their failure to respond is due to cynicism and a lack of confidence in Government to provide practical assistance.

Small businesses, by their nature, constantly fluctuate from year to year from good profits to none at all. The first to suffer and go are their workers, then their savings, then their mortgages. Rarely does Government engage small business on contract to complete big jobs which require too many resources and a limited time frame. Small business does not have the resources and facilities to compete with big business. However, most small business operators work seven days a week and have the tenacity to keep going despite the pitfalls.

Queensland has a vast array of talent, intelligence and innovation, particularly in high technology and electronics, to attract the overseas market. However, after the research and development stage, these technologies are manufactured overseas en masse. Why can Queensland not sustain the manufacture of our own technologies? Should we not be creating our own jobs through the manufacturing and export of these goods? We have thousands of small businesses which, together, could support a large technological industry base. This could be administered by a central facility where training could occur and jobs could be created. The end product would be produced en masse here and not overseas. We must all get behind the Department of State Development to make use of and facilitate the vast array of talent in our home State.

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