



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR ARCHERFIELD

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ACACIA RIDGE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Ms STRUTHERS (Archerfield—ALP) (10.12 a.m.): It is disturbing that many bosses are snubbing older workers, considering them out of touch and unable to learn new tricks. A study by Dr Margaret Steinberg found that 7% of Queensland employers labelled workers past their prime at the age of 36. Corporate downsizing has also left in its wake many unemployed mature age people.

Despite being the economic hub of Brisbane, the suburb of Acacia Ridge has a higher than average rate of unemployment, including many retrenched and long-term unemployed people over 35. It is a hard slog for many of these people and I take the problem very seriously. I moved quickly to take up Minister Paul Braddy's support for mature age people through the Community Jobs Plan. I initiated a project called Into Work with the Acacia Ridge Community Centre. This project received State funding to give intensive support, training and job placement to unemployed people over 35 in the Acacia Ridge area.

I am delighted to report that the first 11 participants graduate from this project this Saturday and that most of them have already scored jobs. I congratulate Steve, Bruce and the other participants and also the project coordinator, Jean Jensen. It is times like these, when I see people directly benefiting from our Government's commitment to jobs, that I know for sure that I am on the right team—not that I have ever had any doubt about this, but it is good to see the consistent good results from our Government.
