



Speech by

BILL FELDMAN

MEMBER FOR CABOOLTURE

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CABOOLTURE BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CENTRE

Mr FELDMAN (Caboolture—CCAQ) (10 a.m.): It is not often that honourable members see me rise in this House to thank the Federal Government for anything, so stand by; I have to do it. I have to thank it on behalf of the Caboolture Business Enterprise Centre. The Federal Government has completed its review of small business incubators, a review conducted by the independent firm PricewaterhouseCoopers. The principal conclusion of the national review of small business incubators in Australia is that their funding should continue. Mr Reith said that it will and I certainly hope it does.

The Caboolture Business Enterprise Centre venture started in 1995 and was abandoned by the Beattie Labor Government last year when it conducted a similar review. The Beattie Labor Government is not showing much confidence in itself and small business, and this lack of support was reflected in the statement made by the Premier yesterday morning. One asks why, when the Caboolture Business Enterprise Centre was also selected by the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business as one of 72 small business incubators to be reviewed.

Let us look at its record. The Caboolture Business Enterprise Centre was established in 1995. It stands alone. It owns one site outright. It contains predominantly light industry and is suitable to the availability of unemployed people in Caboolture. The CBEC itself employs six full-time staff and two part-time staff, has 63 tenants or small businesses operating out of its site, has a 100% occupancy rate and has sponsored 35 businesses which have graduated off site to become established businesses in Caboolture.

Where is this State Government's commitment to the jobs, jobs, jobs when one considers that the excellent achievement of the Caboolture Business Enterprise Centre but for the lack of more financial support could be further improved upon to do even more for the unemployed people of the Caboolture area? The unemployed people of Caboolture ask: where is this Government's commitment and where are its plans for more employment in the Caboolture area? Perhaps we here in Parliament should be asking what is going on with the unemployed people and we should be asking what are this Government's plans in the Caboolture area to actually decrease the level of unemployment in the Caboolture area when it is not funding good and independent enterprises such as the Caboolture Business Enterprise Centre.
