



Speech by

**MIKE KAISER**

**MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE**

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### **LABOUR MARKET PROGRAMS**

**Mr KAISER** (Woodridge—ALP) (11.26 p.m.): Like all people on this side of the Chamber, I was recently appalled to hear the Leader of the Liberal Party describe the Government's Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiatives as a program only to create "phoney jobs". I think this indicates the extent to which the Liberal Party in particular has missed the point that globalisation requires greater Government intervention rather than less Government intervention. It is true that globalisation will create jobs in many new industries, but as a Government we also need to recognise that it will destroy jobs in many other traditional industries on which many working-class people have relied for employment.

The Government's obligation, regardless of whether it is a Liberal/National or Labor Government, in these circumstances is to redistribute opportunity through training and investment in labour market programs. The issue we have to tackle in labour market programs is that of job preparation. These are the issues that Queensland's labour market programs, which we have instituted to take the place of Federal labour market programs that have been abolished by the Federal coalition Government, have tried to address. For example, I am told that the real issue in making the transition from long-term unemployment to employment is really all about lifestyle issues. It is all about the need to manage your lifestyle around work. It is all about the need to learn again how to fit in to a team-working environment. I am told it requires at least three months of work experience to learn the discipline of work. That is why the Federal Government's decision to withdraw from labour market programs has been so destructive to the issue of unemployment in this State and around the nation.

The Commonwealth Government's decision to scrap labour market programs has deprived Queensland's jobless of around \$450m. \$2.1 billion nationally has been slashed from vocational training since the introduction of the Job Network. With Queensland's proportion of national unemployment running at 20% to 22%, \$450m of that total cut has hit Queenslanders directly. Without the efforts of the State Government through the Public Sector Employment Program and the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle program initiatives, around 16,000 Queensland jobless would have been left out in the cold.

While the Commonwealth has drained \$450m in funds for jobless out of the State, the Queensland Government will have invested \$363m by 2003 in providing futures for Queenslanders, picking up the tab for what, since the early 1970s, has been acknowledged as a Federal Government responsibility by both sides of politics. The Queensland Labor Government has done this because we do not believe in leaving our unemployed to languish. We want to give these people hope of a better future, and our jobs programs are proving overwhelmingly more successful than the Commonwealth's.

Let us compare the State's success in placing long-term unemployed people into work with success at the Federal Government level. Take, for example, the work for the dole program, which has a placement rate into employment of only 32%. The reason for that is that it does not address the lifestyle issues that I have referred to previously. There is no compulsory training component to work for the dole, and it is work for only two days a week. How can a long-term unemployed person learn the discipline of work in a work for the dole program that employs them for only two days a week? The Job Network program, which is not really a labour market program but is really just a job placement program, is also similarly a failure. I am told that one agency in Logan City has an 84% attrition rate in placing people after three months. That is only a 16% success rate.

Compare that with Queensland's programs. Compare it, for example, with the CJP and the CEAP program taken together, which has a 50% success rate of participants finding jobs. It is actually a job for three to six months in the CJP, and that makes the difference. That gives people the opportunity to learn life skills and adjust their lifestyle to working again. Is it any wonder that the Queensland Government schemes are registering greater success in assisting the long-term unemployed, with long-term unemployment falling in Queensland by 20% since 1998, while under the former coalition Government, the State recorded a 15% increase?

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