



Speech by

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MATURE-AGE EMPLOYMENT

Ms STRUTHERS (Algeria—ALP) (10.28 a.m.): A very disturbing message is coming from many employers, that is: if you are over 45 years, we are not really interested in you. I am meeting far too many men and women over 45 in my local area who are struggling to find secure work. They feel that they are not even being considered for interviews despite having confidence in their skills and the quality of their applications. An OECD report found that in 1960 the typical working man devoted 50 of his 68 years of life to work. In the 1990s the typical working man lived to 76 but devoted only half his life—38 years—to work.

The Experience Pays Program and the Back to Work Program are very significant new program initiatives introduced this year by the minister, Matt Foley, to assist older job seekers. More than 20 mature-age job seekers have also gained training and work placement through the Community Employment Assistance Program funded locally at Acacia Ridge, in my area. Our state government must continue to expand these projects and progress the Experience Pays and Back to Work initiatives.

International researcher on mature-age employment Dr Phil Taylor is in Brisbane next week to speak at forums hosted by Dr Margaret Steinberg, QCOSS and the Department of Employment and Training. This will provide some much-needed public debate and attention on the plight of mature-age job seekers. All employers must get rid of the early use-by date attitude with which they are unfairly branding mature-age job seekers. They must give them a go. A lot of talent is being overlooked.
