



Speech by

Liz Cunningham

MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE

Hansard Wednesday, 5 September 2007

APPRENTICESHIPS

Mrs CUNNINGHAM (Gladstone—Ind) (11.56 am): On 29 August in the *Observer* the Premier rightly commended the reward system for early finalisation of apprenticeships with the \$1,000 bonus. A constituent in my electorate raised the fact that his daughter finished a hairdressing apprenticeship approximately one year and eight months early, which I think is a phenomenal effort. However, when she called the infoline about the \$1,000 she was told that her trade was not included. Both her and her father feel that that is discriminatory, particularly given that Rebecca shortened her apprenticeship by a large margin and is now gainfully employed. It appears that the only apprenticeships that are on the targeted list are engineering and heavy industry type skills. I know that even in my electorate it is very difficult to get people like hairdressers and others involved in new jobs.

Further, this constituent also commented on the fact that his young son and other young men and women who are apprentices have to go away for TAFE training and are paid \$22 a day as an accommodation allowance. If those young people do not have families in the centres where they have to go for training, the cost of accommodation is much more than that. I have today put a question on notice to the minister for that amount to be reviewed or at least for the gap to be ascertained and for there to be a review on the amount paid. He also said that he was concerned that his nephew—he has a lot of skilled people in his family—from Rockhampton is staying in Gladstone because the area that he is interested in is more common in the Gladstone region. He is going to sign up in the next week or so as a fridge apprentice, but because he is 20 he will still be on junior wages. This gentleman claims that because he has signed up as an apprentice on junior wages he will stay on junior wages for the full time of his apprenticeship. I seek clarification, because I would expect that once he reached the age of majority—21—in the apprenticeship line he should be on senior wages.