



Speech by

Hon. Peter Lawlor

MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

Hansard Wednesday, 19 August 2009

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Tourism Futures National Conference

Hon. PJ LAWLOR (Southport—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Fair Trading) (10.02 am): This week the Tourism Futures National Conference is being held on the Gold Coast. This important national and international event is proudly sponsored by the Bligh government and is a joint partnership between Tourism Australia, Tourism Queensland, the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation, and Gold Coast Tourism. Between 350 and 400 delegates are expected to attend this year including tourism industry leaders, operators and government representatives who will all converge on the Gold Coast for three days to discuss strategic issues that will shape the industry's future. The theme for this year's event is 'Redefining the future', with the event being built around five subthemes: tourism online—marketing and distribution; destination management—policy and development; business events tourism; consumer research and market-winning insights; and sustainability and climate change. Tourism is without a doubt one of the state's most important industries. That is why the government is meeting its commitment to plan for the future.

While the worst global recession in 70 years has cut our income by \$15 billion over the next four years, the Bligh government makes no apologies for making the tough decisions so we can protect our important tourism industry. The Bligh government committed an extra \$36 million to the state's tourism industry to see it through these especially challenging times. Whilst the Bligh government continues to plan, those opposite continue to offer nothing by way of policy. The Bligh government is very open about the events and dinners that we are involved in, unlike the opposition, which seems intent on throwing stones and then hiding on the issues of dinners and fundraising.

The person who aspires to be opposition leader again continues to remain quiet on his \$20,000-a-head dinner at the Brisbane Polo Club. Why so secret? Maybe it was just a Charlie Doyle family reunion. He remains quiet on this, as he does on his aspirations for the leadership. I wait with eager anticipation to see the old feather duster return as a rooster.