



Speech by

**Hon. Curtis Pitt**


**MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE**

Hansard Thursday, 16 June 2011

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## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Budget, Disability Services

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Mental Health and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (10.15 am): Under Labor, funding for Queenslanders with a disability has increased by 495 per cent. This week, we delivered another record budget for disability services and community care—\$1.775 billion, which is an increase of 10 per cent. In my portfolio it is not about the dollars; it is about the people and what we can do as a government to make a difference to people's lives.

I am talking about people like Michael Cherry. I met Michael last week at the opening of the Espresso Train cafe in Nundah—a cafe that employs people with a disability or a mental illness. It is run by Nundah Community Enterprises Co-op and they have taken on around 20 workers, most of them long-term unemployed. They are supported by Social Ventures Australia and they are financially supported by us, with \$50,000 for cafe renovations. With those funds, they were able to expand their cafe and catering business. They have gone from strength to strength. That is where our budget dollars go.

Then there is Michael and Howie. I met them last month at their new, specially modified home in Cairns. This was \$740,00 of state government money well spent to turn what was once a day centre into a fully-functioning home, with 24-hour on-site support for a group of young people with a disability. With this year's state budget, we will be able to modify even more homes for people with a disability to give them the chance to live independently for the first time in their lives.

There is Jessica and Mark. They are recipients of our postschool support initiative. It is about providing pathways for young people with a disability from school life to adult life. Jessica wants to undertake a course in animal studies. Mark, like most young blokes, was playing it cool the day we met, weighing up his options to undertake a trade.

With this year's budget, we will be able to assist 140 more young people with a disability. We are serious about supporting Queenslanders with a disability and giving them real hope for the future. There are few things more important than that—just ask any one of those workers at the Espresso Train cafe in Nundah.