




Speech by

Desley Scott

MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE

Hansard Tuesday, 31 July 2012

SKILLING QUEENSLANDERS FOR WORK

 **Mrs SCOTT** (Woodridge—ALP) (11.39 am): Let me introduce to this House a young man: his name is Pete and he is aged 17. Pete has Asperger's syndrome. He is also a foster kid who has had a troubled past. However, Pete has not been left on the scrap heap because he had access to the Get Set for Work program, which led him into a higher level of training through Skilling Queenslanders for Work. These programs enlivened Pete's interest in carpentry and connected him to SkillsTech, an exceptional trades training centre designed and built by a former Labor government.

Peter is now looking forward to continuing in an apprenticeship when he completes year 12. He and his carers are proud he will have a bright future due to our exceptional Get Set for Work and Skilling Queenslanders for Work programs, the envy of other states. Enter our new Queensland government with Premier Newman on his slash and burn campaign to vindictively obliterate seemingly anything the previous Labor government put in place. Does the Premier have any idea how many thousands of people have received training through these programs—how many young people have been set on the right path because of the very dedicated work of hundreds of trainers throughout the state?

Logan City has historically had a high unemployment rate. However, our city is now standing proud and strong and it is due to the efforts of many hardworking government employees, teachers, workers in our training organisations and many others in our non-government sector, organisations such as BoysTown, Career Keys, Access Community Services, Max Employment, Youth and Family Service—some 23 services throughout Logan City and who knows how many throughout the state.

Skilling Queenslanders for Work and its programs such as Get Set for Work have enjoyed very high success rates and employment outcomes with almost all participants finding jobs. But, more than that, our schools, our parks, our public spaces and many of our organisations have been the recipients of projects as diverse as horticulture and landscaping, painting and renovations, upgrades of facilities and much, much more. Participate in Prosperity for long-term unemployed has seen participants gain self-esteem and confidence and the ability to participate in community with jobs of a suitable nature.

Career Keys alone has lost over 500 training places. Their hairdressing salon and cafe will now be redundant, as will their three computer labs in various locations. The funding and effort expended in setting up these facilities can be measured in the thousands—all to have it wiped away by a media release. They have not even had the decency to make a phone call to the CEO, Sally Edwards. There has been no consultation, no recognition of those who suffer disadvantage being given a hand up to enter the workforce, no thought of those who help others into employment—now themselves out looking for work—no thought of the hundreds who will now have no opportunity of training and participating in the workforce. But let me quote from Deloitte Access Economics—

The future of Queensland is bright ... the state has recovered from an onslaught of natural disasters and remains well placed to take advantage of fast-growing Asian markets ... Queensland's economic growth was "roaring back in to life".

The LNP's mantra of a \$100 billion black hole is a nonsense—indeed, a non-truth. So it is no wonder that a number of LNP MPs who have continued to use the \$100 billion figure now come into this chamber today to apologise to this House. The wholesale sacking of government workers and now the closure of so

many worthwhile programs which will now result in more jobs of quality workers being lost is a travesty, and the LNP will go down in history as the meanest, most heartless government in Queensland's history.

I hope that some LNP backbenchers grow a backbone and start to say 'enough is enough'. There will be many oncers and we will continue to remind the government and our communities of that. We will also remind voters about the stony silence of those who supposedly represent them and their families. And may I just remind this House of the Premier's comment when asked how he found his first 100 days. His words should burn into your psyche. He said, 'I am having fun.' It leaves me speechless. But can I say to all the young people out there who need training and assistance into work: we will continue to support you.

(Time expired)