




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR NUDGE

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Nudgee Electorate, Business

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (2.30 pm): Last month, in conjunction with the Australian Catholic University School of Business, and with special guest speaker Queensland Treasurer and Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Curtis Pitt, I hosted the inaugural Nudgee Business Breakfast. The business breakfast was the first of what I intend to be ongoing opportunities to bring together my local business community and government in shared dialogue regarding this government's economic priorities and how those priorities can translate into local opportunities. With 90 attendees in the room, I was excited by the diversity of local businesses that attended, from small businesses to multinationals, from pharmaceuticals and major food manufacturers to sporting bodies and small retailers. The diversity of businesses present was reflective of the diverse business and industry profile of my electorate. Bounded by the Gateway Motorway and Gympie and Nudgee roads, with 13 train stations including a freight line, and an international airport just down the road, my electorate is strategically located and offers many competitive advantages. When looking at the number of registered businesses by industry across the electorate, it is no surprise that manufacturing, construction, transport, postal and warehousing are significant contributors to the local economy.

The Treasurer's message to my business community was clear: this government is optimistic, upbeat and confident about our state's future. Since the Palaszczuk Labor government came to power, we have recorded eight months of consecutive employment growth. In trend terms, that represents over 34,000 jobs created in Queensland since January, in stark contrast to the previous LNP government that saw unemployment peak at 6.7 per cent and 10,700 full-time jobs lost between March 2012 and January 2015 in trend terms. With Queensland forecast to have nation-leading economic growth in 2015-16, according to respected economic forecasters Deloitte Access Economics, it is little wonder that business confidence in Queensland has been the highest in mainland Australia over the three months to September according to the NAB monthly business survey.

We were elected on a commitment to focus on jobs now and jobs for the future, and our government's focus on increasing business confidence, on increasing the productivity of our labour force through skills development and fostering emerging and innovative industries and investment under the \$1.6 billion Working Queensland package will take Queensland forward. I note that last week in her State of the State address, the Premier made the comment that there is no doubt that ever-expanding new technologies, plus the structural shift in global demand and production, are seriously challenging us. However, these challenges are not insurmountable. They do, in fact, herald immense new possibilities and we must be willing to supercharge our efforts to nurture and encourage a 21st century vision for innovation and the future of our economy.

Nowhere have I seen this more clearly evidenced than in my own electorate. At a recent visit to Sanofi Consumer Healthcare, one of the largest consumer healthcare businesses in Australia and New

Zealand, I was impressed by the state-of-the-art research and manufacturing facility and commitment to market-leading health and personal care products and high-quality manufacturing methods. Sanofi has invested over \$27 million in recent years in its Brisbane-based facility to ensure their team stays at the forefront of Australian new product development and manufacturing and to capitalise on the growth in overseas demand for clean and green Australian products.

Another business operation in my electorate that is taking on the challenge of remaining competitive through innovation is Campbell Arnott's, which over the past few years has invested more than \$100 million in the Arnott's Virginia plant, including a major automation project, bringing robotic technology to three packing lines and the assorted packing operation. This investment in innovation and technology was about remaining competitive in a rapidly changing economy and has secured the future for Arnott's Virginia as a world-class food manufacturing facility.

Our economic plan, including Advance Queensland, Building Queensland and our tourism guarantee and Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiatives, is about getting more Queenslanders back to work, providing certainty for our tourism sector, a new way for assessing and delivering infrastructure and articulating a vision for where we are going as a state economy. The \$40 million Advance Queensland Business Development Fund, an essential part of the \$180 million Advance Queensland package, is about helping to kickstart Queensland's next wave of start-ups and turning great ideas into commercial realities. We want to create more SMEs that can grow into business powerhouses, the profit-makers and job generators of tomorrow.

By co-investing with industry in new business ideas up to a maximum of \$2.5 million, we are not just talking about great ideas; we are investing in them. To mirror the Premier's words, that is how much confidence we have in Queensland's business sector. And we want Queensland's business sector to have confidence in where we are going as a state. When our businesses are confident, they invest in and expand their operations, generating employment growth. We need to create the economic conditions that foster that growth and that is what we are doing. I look forward to supporting growth and investment in my Nudgee business community in the years to come.