




Speech By
Leanne Linard

MEMBER FOR NUDGE

Record of Proceedings, 28 October 2015

JOBS QUEENSLAND BILL

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (5.48 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Jobs Queensland Bill 2015. We were elected on a commitment to focus on jobs now and jobs for the future. Since the Palaszczuk Labor government came to power, we have recorded eight months of consecutive employment growth. In trend terms, this growth represents 34,500 jobs created in Queensland since January. Under our comprehensive Working Queensland framework, we committed to establish Jobs Queensland to reinstate the independent voice of industry on skills in Queensland.

With Queensland forecast to have nation-leading economic growth in 2015-16, according to respected economic forecasters Deloitte Access Economics, we need to ensure that we have the right skills to take advantage of opportunities created by this growth. The objective of the bill is to establish Jobs Queensland as an independent statutory entity to provide strategic industry led advice to government on skills demand and long-term workforce development and planning and the apprenticeship and traineeship system. Jobs Queensland will ensure that skills are better aligned to the job needs of the future. Strategic workforce planning of this nature is imperative to ensure that we have the right skills in the right quantity at the right time.

Our ability to be competitive on a national and international scale depends upon the ability to be able to respond to opportunities in the market, areas of market growth and skills demand. Jobs Queensland will have a focus on making Queensland's VET sector responsive, strong and the most productive in Australia. The vocational education and training sector is vital to building the Queensland economy by delivering the well-trained workers required to address the needs of industry. TAFE Queensland has a vital role to play in providing training where other training organisations will not, including in regional and remote parts of Queensland, and to some of the most disadvantaged Queenslanders. We made an election commitment to the people of Queensland to restore TAFE as the premier public provider of vocational educational and training in Queensland after an unprecedented ideological attack by those opposite. We want to make Queensland's vocational education and training sector the strongest and most productive in Australia. That is why we committed \$34 million over the next three years to regain TAFE Queensland's reputation as the premier provider of VET in this state. That is why we committed to the creation of 100 new full-time-equivalent teaching and support staff positions. Vocational education and training is education and training for work and is a vital part of Queensland and the nation's broader educational network. TAFE Directors Australia estimates that more than one person in every street in Australia is enrolled with TAFE, describing graduates as the heavy lifters in our economy, often as small business owners and major creators of employment.

The bill before the House establishes Jobs Queensland as an independent statutory entity and sets out its core functions, most importantly to provide advice to the Minister for Training and Skills about skills it anticipates will be needed for particular industries in regional areas, future workforce development and planning and the apprenticeship and traineeship system. It is important for industry to inform the government's significant investment in VET to underpin skills development and sustainable

economic growth in Queensland. The provision of independent advice about skills needs, informed by a mix of industry leaders, employer representatives, union representatives and members with relevant expert or specialist skills that form the entity will assist in informing government training priorities, the development of training strategies and programs and government investment in vocational education and training. In performing its functions, Jobs Queensland must have regard to the skills and workforce development needs of industries and communities and economic factors affecting the state. Broad employer consultation will help small, medium and large entities from across Queensland that have a direct and tangible stake in such decisions contribute towards advising government on skills and workforce development and planning matters. Importantly, Jobs Queensland will be able to carry out and promote research and market intelligence and promote public awareness of its statutory functions. The bill and the establishment of Jobs Queensland will allow critical industry led workforce planning to ensure industry can meet future workforce needs, stimulate innovation and achieve global competitiveness. Jobs Queensland will reinstate the independent voice of industry on skills in Queensland.

We were elected on a commitment to jobs: to reducing Queensland's unemployment rate by keeping jobs, creating jobs and skilling individuals to meet industry demand now and into the future. The bill will assist in meeting these commitments and accordingly I commend the bill to the House.