




Speech By
Mark Ryan

MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD

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MOTION OF CONFIDENCE

 **Mr RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (2.11 am): Mr Speaker, I have waited a long time to address this House again. It is good to be back. I rise to speak in support of the motion.

Mr Elmes: About three years, I would say.

Mr RYAN: About that time. Mr Speaker, may I start by congratulating you on your election to the high office of Speaker of this 55th Queensland Parliament. I know you will distinguish yourself in that role, and after speaking with your family at the garden party on Wednesday I know how proud they are of this achievement. Congratulations. May I also sincerely thank the people of the Morayfield state electorate for allowing me the great honour of representing them in this House. I will say more about my most sincere gratitude to the people of the Morayfield state electorate at a future time. It was once said—

Those of you that sit high should never forget who put you there. It doesn't matter who is up if no-one is looking up to you. You can't be a leader if nobody is following you and whoever the people raise up, the people can tear down.

The previous Newman LNP government did not just take the people of Queensland for granted: they misled Queenslanders. They broke their 2012 election contract with Queensland. Rather than fighting for Queenslanders, they fought against them and at every opportunity picked fights with everybody they came across. In every respect the LNP let Queenslanders down. The previous LNP government forgot the people who put them on the treasury benches, and quite rightly the people tore them down.

The 2015 Queensland state election was a referendum on what Queenslanders wanted their state to look like. It was a referendum on whether Queenslanders wanted their government to fight for them rather than to pick fights with them. The people of Queensland could choose the LNP's approach to governing—austerity, limiting government participation in the economy, hubris, arrogance, broken promises, lack of accountability and transparency, undermining the integrity of our judicial and parliamentary institutions and conflict—or they could choose the better way proposed by Anastacia Palaszczuk and Labor.

This better way of governing would end the fights; restore accountability, transparency and integrity to our democracy; embrace partnerships between government, business and community; create jobs and job opportunities, especially for young Queenslanders; invest in front-line services; and deliver good, fair, stable and compassionate government for Queenslanders. In the Morayfield state electorate and throughout our state, Queenslanders chose that better way. Queenslanders chose Labor. In the Morayfield state electorate, voters chose Labor's better way because the LNP's approach to governing was taking our community backwards.

The Caboolture region bore the brunt of the LNP's austerity agenda. Many local people were directly affected by the massive Public Service job cuts. During the election campaign I met with many local people who were affected by that program of job cuts and job destruction. I met with nurses who had lost their jobs at the Caboolture Hospital; I met with public servants who were forced to leave their

jobs for no reason; I met with young people who could not find work and their parents who were at pains to help their kids find work; and I met with local businesspeople who were facing financial ruin because the policies of the former LNP government had destroyed confidence in our local economy. It should come as no surprise to the House that the unemployment rate in the Caboolture region was one of the highest unemployment rates in Queensland and the youth unemployment rate was one of the highest youth unemployment rates in Australia. At one point, the youth unemployment rate in the Caboolture region hit a record high of almost 20 per cent. The LNP directly contributed to this situation through its policies, and decisive action is now needed to correct it.

That is why I am pleased to hear that a Palaszczuk Labor government will reinstate the successful Skilling Queenslanders for Work program and introduce a ready for work scheme for young people. Labor will also provide new and additional opportunities for our young people to undertake a traineeship or apprenticeship by reintroducing the 125 per cent payroll tax rebate for employers engaging trainees or apprentices and requiring government owned corporations to ensure that 10 per cent of all workers on major projects are apprentices and trainees.

Labor has been, and always will be, the party of jobs. Only Labor is truly committed to job creation. Whilst the task ahead may be tough, Labor's plan to work with business and our community will create jobs and provide greater employment opportunities for the people of the Caboolture region and the people of Queensland. The people of Queensland and the people of the Morayfield state electorate need a Labor government. The Newman LNP government did not miss the Morayfield state electorate when it swung its axe at public infrastructure projects and services. But the former government did not just make local infrastructure projects disappear: under their stewardship of the treasury benches they also made local bus services disappear; tenancy advice services vanished; job services like Skilling Solutions Queensland were wiped; and even funding for adult literacy centres was withdrawn. There were many other services which experienced a similar fate in the Caboolture region. These services made a big difference to people's lives. These services helped people. These services were the difference between someone being homeless and someone having a roof over their heads, or the difference between someone being able to read and get a job or having to forever struggle. Those cuts were nasty and brutish. Thank goodness that, in respect of some of those services, those cuts will now only be short.

As further proof of Labor's commitment to jobs and providing the services that our community so desperately needs, Labor will employ more nurses at our local hospital to keep patients safe and more teachers to reduce class sizes. On top of this, Labor will also restore workers' rights, ensure workplace safety is a priority once again and again allow workers to seek common law compensation for injuries suffered at work through no fault of their own.

Labor in government will also take decisive action on saving the Great Barrier Reef and protecting our wonderful Queensland environment. Where the LNP presided over the largest increase in land clearing in almost a decade and got into a fight with an ice-cream company over their impetus in protecting the Great Barrier Reef, Labor has a clear plan to protect Queensland's natural environment for today and for tomorrow.

Labor will also restore transparency, accountability and integrity to government, will listen to Queenslanders and key stakeholders and will adopt a consultative and consensus approach to policy development. In an interview with the ABC's Leigh Sales on 28 January, heroic corruption fighter Tony Fitzgerald said in response to a question about the Newman LNP government's performance—

As Goss had set a new high standard, they probably set a new low standard.

Where the LNP fell well short of the high standards of transparency, accountability and integrity demanded and expected in parliamentary democracies, Labor's commitment to restoring respect for the Queensland parliament, shining a light on political donations, reinstating the independence of Queensland's anti-corruption watchdog and robust parliamentary oversight of it, and ensuring that the government always makes decisions in the public interest are more reasons this House must support the motion that we have confidence in the Palaszczuk Labor government. I say that because only a Palaszczuk Labor government is committed to those high standards of transparency, accountability and integrity essential to a healthy democracy and economy.

On every count the LNP failed to live up to its promises. The LNP broke its contract with Queenslanders. If you cannot keep your promises, how can this House ever have confidence in your ability to govern? How can anyone ever have confidence in your ability to govern, full stop?

The decision for members of this House in this debate is between a Palaszczuk Labor government with an economic plan to pay down general government debt without asset sales and an LNP opposition that was forced into junking its short-sighted program of unwanted and unnecessary fire sale of some of Queensland's most profitable public assets—a program that was absolutely rejected by the people of Queensland.

The opposition's plan for Queensland is like Mother Hubbard's cupboard: it is bare. It is devoid of any substance. Just as the shop owner is constantly reminded that the customer is always right, similarly participants in the political process should accept the decisions made at the ballot box by the electorate. In other words, the voters are always right. I hope that members of this House respect that.

At the 2015 Queensland state election many Queenslanders voted for a better way with Labor. Many Queenslanders voted for a Labor government. All members must remind themselves that Queenslanders elected a parliament in which the Australian Labor Party holds the greatest number of seats and a parliament in which the Australian Labor Party has commitments of support from the majority of members of this House on motions of confidence.

The message of the 2015 Queensland state election is clear: voters want a government that will end the fights; restore accountability, transparency and integrity to our democracy; embrace partnerships between government, business and community; create jobs and job opportunities; invest in front-line services; and deliver good, fair, stable and compassionate government for all Queenslanders.

The voters wanted a change at the 2015 Queensland state election, and a change is what they voted for. It is for all of these reasons that the only choice members of this House have is to vote in favour of the motion before the House, to vote in favour of the motion that we have confidence in the Palaszczuk Labor government. I commend the motion to the House and encourage all members to support the motion.