




Speech By
Hon. Curtis Pitt

MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE

Record of Proceedings, 9 November 2016

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Small Business

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (2.48 pm): Obviously we have seen another day where the lazy Leader of the Opposition, the member for Clayfield, wakes up, rolls out of bed, reads the newspaper and gets his tips from the newspaper that he will no doubt be asking questions about today, and he will go and lie in his hammock. We are going to hear all sorts of things today from the member for Indooroopilly, who no doubt will run the same lines that we have seen in his press release today that the LNP is apparently the saviour of small business. Let us look at what happens when it comes to small business in this state and which government has been providing support verses the rhetoric that those opposite continue to put out there.

Let us look at funding for small business under our government versus the last government. The LNP when it came to office in 2012 cut small business support. Those opposite abolished the small business commissioner. They cut \$700,000 from the Mentoring for Growth program. They cut online business services. They cut 20 per cent of staff in DTESB. They had a litany of broken promises, but one of the big ones to the business community was the payroll tax threshold increase of \$100,000 each year over six years which they were meant to deliver. How many did they deliver in their three years? They delivered one. That was one of their key signature policies. They must have had some explaining to do to the business community. We have a different view, of course. We have a payroll tax initiative which looks at hiring apprentices and trainees because we believe we get a direct employment benefit out of our payroll tax liability reduction through this rebate.

When we look at the amount of funding over the 2012-15 period of the LNP in office, they were funding small business between \$7 million and \$9 million a year. The Palaszczuk government has boosted this spending to \$12.9 million in 2015-16 and \$18.8 million in the current financial year. We brought back government support for small business. I think we have the best small business minister we have seen in Queensland for many a year. The member for Algester is doing a terrific job engaging with the small business community. She has established the Office of Small Business and the five-year Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy, which is a \$22.7 million investment from this government in small business.

What small business needs most is customers. When those opposite, particularly the member for Clayfield in his first budget, pushed 14,000 people out the door, that had a chilling effect on demand. We know that the opposition leader does not believe public sector jobs are real jobs. We understand that he thinks the only real jobs are those in the private sector. Presumably he thinks that the wages of those public sector workers were not real wages either. When they used to spend in small businesses, clearly they were not spending real money in local businesses. Anyone around George Street and the

Brisbane CBD knows that, after the massive public sector purge that happened under the member for Clayfield, coffee shops were closing. Everyone relied on people spending money in the economy. What they did was smother the Queensland economy. We will hear crocodile tears from those opposite today. We know that the real friend of small business in this state is the Australian Labor Party.