



Speech By  
**Hon. Curtis Pitt**


**MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE**

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Record of Proceedings, 10 November 2016

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Back to Work Youth Boost**

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (9.47 am): As the Premier has announced, the government is extending the offer of financial support to regional business owners who hire previously unemployed people through our Back to Work initiative. The \$100 million program announced in the state budget offers support to employers of \$10,000 for taking on a previously unemployed worker or \$15,000 for a long-term unemployed person. These payments will continue. We will now have a time-limited offer of a \$20,000 Back to Work Youth Boost—double the existing payment—for regional employers who engage jobseekers aged 15 to 24 and keep them on for at least 12 months.

Applications for the new Back to Work Youth Boost will be open between 1 December 2016 and 28 February 2017. Everyone in our community should be concerned about young people being out of work and seeking new opportunities for their futures. This government is doing everything it can to ensure that another generation is not consigned to the unemployment scrap heap. Our resolve to drive down regional youth unemployment is unwavering. Some regions are showing a welcome downward trend in youth jobless rates compared with a year ago. Others, as we know, have been consistently high, including Cairns at 27.1 per cent in September and Townsville with a youth jobless rate of 16.1 per cent. The Back to Work Youth Boost delivers and is ideal for small business operators. If you are in tourism, hospitality, retail, or any other sector for that matter, then you should wear it as a badge of honour that you gave a local young person their first start in their working life.

So far 336 employers across regional Queensland have successfully applied for a Back to Work support payment. More than \$2.9 million has already been paid to them to employ 678 previously unemployed regional Queenslanders. Together with a further 230 applications received, there are up to 908 regional Queenslanders who stand to get jobs from this program with their employers receiving more than \$7.2 million in support payments. We are determined to support young Queenslanders in regions that are doing it tough as we transition to a post-mining boom economy. That is what the Back to Work program is all about. It is available only to regional employers and specifically excludes South-East Queensland because this is the part of the economy that we need to support, particularly in terms of employment growth. This latest initiative, the Back to Work Youth Boost, shows that, as we promised, we are the government that is about job creation; it continues to be this government's central focus