




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Record of Proceedings, 16 March 2016

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENTS

Jobs

 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (2.52 pm): In spite of what those opposite think, since the election of the Palaszczuk government last January, job creation has returned to the top of Queensland's economic agenda. The mass sackings and rising unemployment we saw under the LNP have been replaced by new jobs, and that is good news for Queenslanders. Around 70,000 new jobs have been created in Queensland since the state election, and our trend unemployment rate is at a two-year low.

If those opposite for one minute think that they have any credibility when it comes to unemployment, they are sadly mistaken. For once they have unemployment on their agenda. In fact, I struggled even to remember who the employment minister was under the previous government. I actually struggled to remember who it was. I realised that it was the member for Surfers Paradise, who has never done anything in relation to unemployment.

The member for Clayfield rose in this House just before, talking about the State Infrastructure Plan. However, when they went to the last election, you did not get anything unless you voted for them. Queenslanders sent you a very strong message. They did not want what those opposite had in store. They wanted a change and they voted for a change, and a change is exactly what we are delivering. We are getting on with the job. We are working with businesses. We are working with employers. We are going around the regions. Let me tell you what they say to me, Mr Speaker. They say, 'Thank God you're here, Minister, because we never saw anyone from those opposite come to talk to us about employment issues.' Do you know why? Because they never had any employment projects.

Ms Trad: They were busy sacking people.

Ms GRACE: I take that interjection—they were busy sacking people. That was the message they were sending. It is great that now, spurred on by nation-building confidence in this state, Queensland employers are returning to hiring, not firing. That is the way we want it to happen. Long may it continue in that vein. I have been to Maryborough and Mackay—and I will visit Mount Isa with the Premier soon—to hold employment forums, and the employers together with us are saying, 'What a great idea.' They are enthusiastic. They want to put their ideas forward. They want to employ people. They want to build the regions, and it is Labor that is helping them do it, not those opposite.

We will continue with our job creating. They love the Accelerated Works Program projects—the projects that are talked about over there as if they are not working. They are creating hundreds of jobs around this state. They are working in a fantastic way. They are employing local people. That is what Labor stands for. That is what we will deliver. Those opposite have no credibility.