




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Record of Proceedings, 15 September 2016

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Jobs

 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.20 am): It was great to have Kath Day-Knight quoted in parliament by those opposite. The Palaszczuk government came into office with jobs as our No. 1 priority, not quoting daytime shows. We inherited an unemployment rate of 6.6 per cent, after three years of the LNP government which saw more than 30,000 Queenslanders thrown onto the jobless queue.

When the Leader of the Opposition was treasurer, the jobless rate hit a high of 7.1 per cent in October 2014. The LNP had no plan for dealing with unemployment during their time in office—just a plan for selling off assets and cutting jobs. They abolished Skilling Queenslanders for Work, reinstated by the Palaszczuk government. They sacked 14,000 public servants; front-line services are being reinstated by the Palaszczuk government. Each month under the Newman government, 380 full-time jobs were lost. Let me repeat that: 380 full-time jobs were lost every month. That is the record of those opposite.

By comparison, since we have come to office, 40,000 new jobs have been created in this state. Youth unemployment, which those opposite go on about, has fallen from 14.1 per cent to 12.9 per cent, with the latest July figures showing that in the regions 10 out of the 14 categories had a reduction in youth unemployment—10 of the 14 categories. Throughout this period, unemployment has remained below levels under the Newman government and new jobs continue to be created, but we recognise that there is always more work to do.

In the most recent budget, we have taken the view that the regions need targeted support and assistance. This came through the cabinet working committee, meetings throughout regional Queensland and the jobs forum held throughout regional Queensland. We are supporting the new jobs and industries of the future—biofuels, solar, education and training, agriculture and tourism, which is going gangbusters at the moment with international investment.

As an aside, I notice that the member for Clayfield is next on the speaking list. With international investment and visitors to this country necessary for our economic growth, is he going to rule out any preference deal with One Nation? I call on him to grow a backbone. He can say it today. He can put it on the record. Is he going to support a party which talks about 'being swamped by Muslims' and which 20 years ago talked about 'being swamped by Asians'? I am sure that 20 years earlier than that it would have been the Greeks, Italians and the Jews. Is he going to show some backbone? Is he going to jeopardise those jobs of the future? Is he going to stand up in this place and rule out any One Nation dirty deal? I call on him to do so.