




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR PINE RIVERS

Record of Proceedings, 1 November 2016

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Jobs

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (12.00 pm): We on this side of the House know what the dignity of work means to everyday Queenslanders. That is why job creation is the No. 1 priority of Labor in government. As a Labor candidate I knocked on many doors throughout my community in 2014 and 2015, and I heard stories of the journeys of so many in our community. People opened up with me to share their struggles and their triumphs. The struggles were all too common in our streets and our neighbourhoods, and the triumphs were few and far between. To my measure, it takes a lot of courage for someone to open up and share their struggles, for someone to share that vulnerability, particularly with someone like me who, in many instances, had just made their acquaintance. For so many, just below the surface was their sad story, their negative experience brought about by the decisions made by the previous government in this place—decisions that left lives torn apart, families plunged into uncertainty and communities without vital services.

We cannot speak about the current state of unemployment or jobs in Queensland without acknowledging the callous decisions of those opposite that cut public employment to the core—decisions that locked people out of the labour market and destroyed careers and potential prosperity. To put the current state of unemployment in context, we are currently sitting at 6.1 per cent unemployment. Labor in government has created 600 full-time jobs a month, compared with the 300 jobs lost every month when LNP leader Tim Nicholls was treasurer.

We recognise that there is much more work to do. We have set about restoring front-line services in health, education and emergency services, to name just a few. Our community appreciate the ramifications of cuts that went too deep, too far and too quick. Some ramifications you see immediately; others the public becomes aware of later, like when there is a tragedy in child safety or the rail system buckles under the pressure of having the guts cut out of driver training.

We also recognise that employment growth has been concentrated in South-East Queensland. This reflects gains in the service sector, particularly the public and private delivery of education and health services. Our brothers and sisters in the regions need more focus and more opportunity to continue to drive unemployment down. These challenging conditions can be best observed in the resource sector, where we have seen elevated unemployment rates over recent months—in this area most notably in Townsville and outback Queensland, which have previously experienced strong outcomes.

Even with these unfortunate circumstances, unemployment on the whole remains lower under an ALP government than when the now opposition leader, Tim Nicholls, was treasurer of the failed Newman government. In fact, while the member for Clayfield was responsible for Queensland's financial management unemployment skyrocketed to 6.4 per cent. It is only under a Labor government that we will see the results of a downward-tracking trend in unemployment.

There is still more work to do. Opportunity comes in many different forms. Education unlocks employment potential. Education is the key to building the economy of the future. That is why the Palaszczuk government is investing in business and investing in the education needed to get people into jobs and into careers.

The payroll tax apprentice and trainee rebate is a government incentive to reduce the payroll tax costs for businesses that employ apprentices and trainees under the Further Education and Training Act 2014 since July 2015. As part of the government's drive to create jobs we have doubled this incentive in the 2016-17 year. Over 3,368 businesses have claimed the rebate since its introduction, with a total rebate value of \$15.409 million. Initiatives like this create jobs and support families—jobs that enable people to plan for the future, the kinds of jobs that build lives. The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring that Queenslanders have the continued opportunities of economic growth, the growth of employment opportunities and continued opportunities of prosperity right through Queensland.