



Speech By  
**Hon. Cameron Dick**


**MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE**

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## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Employment**

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (2.21 pm): All of us in this House understand that we operate in an adversarial system and that at its heart politics is a vigorous and tough contest, but the instinct for combat is tempered by the responsibility inherent in our work—the duty we have to those we represent who hope and trust that we will serve their interests, that we will work to improve their communities, that we will pursue policies that seek to make their lives better.

When the government says that we are pursuing a jobs agenda, we do more than make a rhetorical point. When we talk about restoring front-line services, about reinstating and renewing the workforce, including in our health system, it is not merely to prosecute a political argument. The idea that there is dignity in work has been well ventilated, but it is more than that. Meaningful paid employment is the ticket out of the hardship and degradation of poverty. Work can provide purpose and direction to our lives, deliver material sufficiency to us and our families and help shape our social identity. There is no more serious obligation on the parliament than to work every day to provide the opportunity for every Queenslanders to engage in paid employment. It has always been at the heart of the political ideology of the Australian Labor Party and it is the engine that drives the agenda of the Palaszczuk Labor government.

The Public Service serves the public. When jobs are cut, it has a direct impact on the quality of services delivered to the people of Queensland. The Leader of the Opposition has said that there will be no forced redundancies in the Public Service under an LNP government. That is like the fox saying you can trust him with the henhouse because he is now a vegetarian. Jobs are at the top of the government's agenda because we believe in the transformative power of work. Before the last election we promised we would restore front-line services, and that is what we have done across government and particularly in Health. Since coming to office, we have employed an additional 1,250 doctors, more than 4,300 nurses, including 3,550 nurse graduates through our Nursing Guarantee initiative, and almost 1,200 allied health professionals. There have been jobs in construction through our Enhancing Regional Hospitals program, jobs in mental health, jobs in aged care, in Indigenous health, in paediatric care, in preventative care, in palliative care and in research. The Palaszczuk government is working for Queensland by getting Queensland working.