




Speech By
Christopher Whiting

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

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TRADING (ALLOWABLE HOURS) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr WHITING** (Murrumba—ALP) (9.07 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Trading (Allowable Hours) Amendment Bill. I do so because it will mean a stronger economy in the electorate of Murrumba and future Bancroft, especially in the area of North Lakes. Retail is at the centre of growth in our area. Let me state it officially: North Lakes is now the fastest growing area in Queensland. The mayor, Allan Sutherland, has stated that it is now the fastest growing area in Australia.

The population of North Lakes and the surrounding area has increased from 52,000 in 2011 to 72,000 in 2016. North Lakes is home to 20,000 residents and 900 businesses, supporting 7,700 jobs. That will rise to 13,000 by 2023. One of the reasons that we have such strong growth is that we are now the leading retail and lifestyle centre in southern Queensland. There is a huge amount of investment going into retail infrastructure in our area. There is the new Ikea and the Westfield link mall, linking to Ikea, which has 60 stores, and that has delivered 900 jobs.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Order! Members in the House, there is far too much audible noise through conversations. Members, I am having difficulty hearing the member on his feet. Can you please take your conversations outside or listen to the member on his feet.

Mr WHITING: As we know, it is the site of Queensland's first Costco as well. In the area of retail space, there is the \$250 million Laguna project coming—boutique shopping, a hotel, an office tower—with construction starting next year. The \$75 million stage 2 Primewest Homemaker Centre opened earlier this year, and that has created hundreds of new jobs. There is a lot of retail infrastructure and investment coming into my electorate. What these investors need is certainty, and this bill delivers that certainty by cutting red tape and increasing choice for retail customers in my area. With this bill we see 99 trading hours provisions reduced to just seven standard trading hours provisions for large stores such as we see in North Lakes.

It is astounding that over the past months the LNP have continued to stand in the way of the reduction in red tape. It is the world turned upside down! This is the most basic of red-tape reductions that we can do and they have squibbed it. They have said it is too hard. They have thrown up their hands and walked away from it. The member for Mount Ommaney decried what she saw as a lack of certainty, but I will tell members what generates most uncertainty for retail—and that is job cuts, job cuts as we saw from the LNP government during the term of the Campbell Newman government. That was the worst time for retail—the cuts to jobs from the LNP. People were telling me that everyone was shutting their wallets and purses. They were not spending their money. The worst thing for retail that we could see in this state is the return of an LNP government and their liking for what they call 'rightsizing' the Public Service.

What have the LNP said about the effects of the bill on small business? They have intimated that competition may kill them. What about the traders in those larger shopping centres that rely on more store traffic? I am talking about coffee shops such as Coffee Hit at Westfield North Lakes. In one large shopping centre, the Shopping Centre Council reported a 13 per cent increase in monthly customer foot

traffic following the introduction of Sunday trading. Weekend customer traffic also increased from an average of 17 per cent of weekly traffic to 26 per cent of weekly traffic. With this approach in our bill, we can increase gross state product by \$79 million and support an extra 1,000 jobs.

I have to commend the minister for the changes she has outlined, which I will go through. In regional areas, there will be an 8 am start instead of a 7 am start, Monday to Friday. It will be 8 am to 6 pm on weekends. Where it said 7 am previously when we are talking about regional Queensland, it is now 8 am. Where they do not have Sunday trading in regional Queensland, there will be a moratorium on that. There will be no further applications for five years. That gives real stability to the retail industry in that area as well. These are great changes that the minister has brought in, and I would like to see everyone here supporting them.

In South-East Queensland, the hours will still be 7 am to 9 pm, Monday to Saturday—the same as it is now. The trading hours for Sundays and public holidays will be standardised across Queensland from 9 am to 6 pm. That will suit the large retailers in my area very well. It will mean more sales and more jobs. We attract shoppers from throughout South-East Queensland, but we also attract people from the regions who travel up to five hours in some cases to come to Costco and other large-scale shops. I know that this bill will help build up in my area the customer base for all those North Lakes businesses, and that means more jobs for local people. More jobs means a better lifestyle for the residents in my area and that drives more development and more economic development.

Development is certainly riding high on this retail culture in the North Lakes area. There are 5,000 new home sites in North Lakes, 2,000 home sites in the Capestone development at Mango Hill and 600 house sites at the Aspire site in Griffin. There is a flow-on from the retail to the development, and it means other investments flow throughout the community as well. We have Queensland's best new health hub, led by the state government's North Lakes Health Precinct. That hub includes the new Icon Integrated Cancer Centre, the latest facility by another Queensland company providing every possible cancer related service to the people of Queensland.

We also have Keymax, a great local company, headquartered in North Lakes. They are delivering a \$40 million boutique hotel into North Lakes, as well as an office tower on Anzac Avenue. I have met Jan Kraaij and I appreciate his dedication to keeping his company headquartered in North Lakes. All this growth has driven the spectacular success of the North Lakes Sports Club. They wanted 10,000 members in their first year of operation; they got 12,000 members in just three months of being open. They employ 130 local people. I am very proud of the emergence of North Lakes as the leading retail hub in Queensland. This bill supports the growth of that hub, supports our local economy and supports those local people who work in those local jobs. I commend this bill to the House.