




Speech By
Jennifer Howard

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

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**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL:
LEGAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE**

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (5.13 pm): I am not on the committee and I was not there on the day of the estimates hearing, but there seems to be two different realities going on here. I have read the *Hansard* and I have read the report.

Mr Crandon: You weren't there.

Ms HOWARD: The *Hansard* does not lie. What I saw from the opposition during the estimates hearing for training and skills was two things: firstly, they do not care. They chose to spend their time and their opportunity to ask about training and skills to instead ask about issues in a different portfolio, even when they knew they had time allocated to the statutory bodies in the very next session. They also showed that they do not know and do not care about the impact being felt by the significant cuts from the budget. They either refuse to admit or do not understand that when the federal government rips money away from training and funding apprentices it creates an environment where there is mass uncertainty for providers and those wanting to train in Queensland.

Secondly, the member for Kawana showed he actually does not care about training and skills in Queensland. Instead of spending his allocated time asking questions that were relevant to the portfolio of Training and Skills, he wasted everyone's time with a series of questions that no-one could say was in any way related to training and skills. He then followed this up with his typical behaviour so that when he did ask a question he did not bother to listen to the answer.

Had he taken the time to actually listen he would have heard how the Palaszczuk government is increasing its contribution to training and skills while federal funding falls. He would have heard how the Rescuing TAFE package has helped nearly 12,000 Queenslanders access second chance funding and restored vital support services for students. He would have heard how students are coming back to TAFE facilities that those opposite had gutted as that part of their crusade to sack nearly 2,000 staff from TAFE Queensland.

As the member for Ipswich, I am so proud that Jobs Queensland is based in the Icon building right in the Ipswich CBD—a move that I advocated for and a recognition of the Ipswich area as its own economy with its own skilling needs and its own profile. Jobs Queensland is a very important part of the Palaszczuk government's commitment to training and skills in this state, and it is working with multiple industries on projects in advanced manufacturing, apprenticeships, Commonwealth Games, as well as regional skills plans for Ipswich and Wide Bay.

Jobs Queensland has been hard at work on a wide variety of projects, and it was pleasing to see one of those projects released on the morning of the hearing. The Tourism Workforce Plan is an important document that spells out the needs of the tourism and hospitality industry and how the government needs to act to ensure these needs are met. This report will be followed by 13 regional reports and will identify the specific job and skills needs for each region, recognising that the Gold Coast

will have different needs for their tourism workforce than Ipswich might. With 20,000 extra staff forecast to be needed by 2020, this work of Jobs Queensland is vital to ensure we position the industry for future growth.

I also want to take the opportunity to speak about the great success of the Skilling Queenslanders for Work project in the Ipswich area. In the Ipswich local government area, we have invested nearly \$14 million on 50 Skilling Queenslanders for Work projects, targeting long-term unemployed, at-risk people, ageing workers and at-risk youth—to name just a few. From that, 1,350 people have completed projects and 829 have already gained employment. I am very confident that as more people complete programs this number will continue to rise.

It is clear that the opposition have no plan for training and skills in Queensland. Will they cut Skilling Queenslanders for Work again? Will they re-embark on their effort to reduce TAFE to a shell of itself? There have been ample opportunities for them to come clean with the Queensland community, yet they still will not. Is this because they do not want people to know or is it possible that the member for Kawana simply cannot be bothered?

I want to touch briefly on some of the fantastic initiatives being rolled out across the Justice portfolio. I am proud to be a part of the Palaszczuk government. We are reinstating the Murri Court and the Drug Court to build a safer community. We are taking offensive slogans and pictures off our roads with the Wicked Campers legislation. We have increased funding for our justice system to provide an accessible and fair justice system for all Queenslanders, including \$31.6 million over five years to expand and upgrade the audiovisual equipment in courthouses which will improve court efficiencies, give greater flexibility to the vulnerable or distant witnesses and cut the cost of transporting prisoners to and from trials.

The Palaszczuk government is also expanding the domestic and family violence court, which was successfully trialled at Southport. It is a \$69.5 million investment over four years to continue the domestic and family violence court at Southport, as well as a further rollout to Beenleigh and Townsville, with circuit courts to Mount Isa and Palm Island.