




Speech By
Joseph Kelly

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Skilling Queenslanders for Work; Back to Work

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (3.04 pm): 'When I lost my vision I thought I'd never work again, but this program has given me the confidence and the skills to get back into the world of work.' That is what Helene, one of the graduates from the latest Skilling Queenslanders for Work program, said to me at the graduation ceremony last week at Vision Australia. Nearly 60 per cent of working age people with low or no vision are unemployed. This is the second group to have completed the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program at Vision Australia and I am extremely pleased that the minister has announced that there will be another program funded, along with two other organisations in my electorate, to continue to create jobs in our local community.

Since this program was reinstated by the Palaszczuk government, over 9,000 people have gained the skills and confidence to re-enter the workforce. Compare that to the 14,000 those opposite sacked. Not only did they shut this program down; they also sacked the people who ran it and 14,000 other public servants. I am proud to be part of a government that has put 9,000 people back to work in just this one program alone.

My regional colleagues have been telling me about the Back to Work program and I can see why: 902 jobs in Mackay; 1,279 in Wide Bay; 279 in South-West Queensland. I lobbied the Treasurer about bringing this program to Greenslopes and I am so pleased we have done just that in the recent budget. I have been talking to local small business owners about this great program. Just this week I was speaking to a small business owner in Stones Corner. He has a casual young employee and he told me he would love to give her a permanent job and this program was the incentive he needed to do just that. The Back to Work program will create more local jobs for young people and for people who are long-term unemployed.

I had one of my regular catch-up meetings with Carmel Dalton from the School Community Industry Partnership Service. She was over the moon about the Back to Work program and said that all small business owners she was talking to were really enthusiastic. I know that people like Carmel and organisations like SCIPS will help to achieve results like those in Far North Queensland where 1,427 people have been employed so far.

The Skilling Queenslanders for Work and Back to Work programs are just part of the story of creating local jobs in Greenslopes. The Palaszczuk government has put front-line workers back to work. Teachers, nurses, police, doctors and child safety workers are back in our community doing the jobs they love. We did not sack 14,000 public servants. We listened and we put them back to work. The response from principals, P&C and P&F presidents to the announcement of a prep teacher aide in every classroom has been enormously positive. One principal's automatic response when I told him was 'Oh my God, this is fantastic.'

In addition to putting these front-line workers back to work, we are investing in infrastructure like Cross River Rail and investing \$200 million in our schools, creating thousands of local jobs. Skilling Queenslanders for Work, Back to Work, restoring front-line services, building infrastructure—that is how the Palaszczuk government is creating more local jobs.