




Speech By
Mark Boothman

MEMBER FOR ALBERT

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TRADING (ALLOWABLE HOURS) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (10.43 pm): I rise to make a short contribution on the Trading (Allowable Hours) Amendment Bill 2017. For some time trading hours have slowly been deregulated across Queensland. This has had deep ramifications to our local convenience stores and has caused a lot of these small convenience stores to compete with larger firms that have the financial capacity to wage relentless campaigns to ensure market dominance against them.

I have had recent conversations with my local Spar convenience stores, and the decision to extend trading hours on 1 December 2016 has been disastrous for these small mum-and-dad businesses. These small convenience stores give so much back to my local community through direct donations and donations in kind to my local sporting groups. The changes on 1 December, as I said, have already had a heavy impact on their sales and have greatly reduced their chances to expand their businesses and employ more people. Therefore, real employment growth with the small to medium convenience store sector has been greatly affected.

These are people with mortgages, families and bills to pay. They are people like Rahid from Upper Coomera Spar or Duncan and Grant from Oxenford Spar. They are the embodiment of the Australian spirit. They believe in having a fair go and trying to make their own way in this world. We should be doing everything we can to protect these businesses and allow them to grow, to give them their own little niche market so they can continue to expand and hire teenagers and get them into the workforce. These individuals cannot protest; they do not have the resources to protest. They have rent to pay, they have electricity bills and they need to be in their stores to manage their businesses and look after their customers to make sure they come back because they are satisfied.

In the long run, it is the consumer who suffers from the loss of these small businesses through the reduction of choice and competition. Therefore, extending trading hours for the big end of town will only speed up the demise of my local Spars and my local little IGAs. It is hard enough for these small businesses to make ends meet without giving an unfair advantage to the big end of town of Woolworths and Coles. They do not need any more assistance to increase their market share.

In the minister's opening speech back in May, she claimed that the bill will lead to an additional 945 full-time-equivalent jobs. The member for Noosa and other members on this side spoke about the self-service check-outs, and I can certainly say they are very prominent in my local Woolworths and Coles. The staff at my local Coles funnel as many people through these check-outs as possible. That is not creating employment growth; that is not helping to expand employment in my region. It is very crucial that we make sure these local Spars and local IGAs are looked after, that we give them their niche market and that we protect their hours.

On the northern Gold Coast we have had a bit of crime in recent times. There was an armed robbery at one of my local Spars and it was very emotional and tough for the individuals concerned. The shop owner said that they were insured and that they would be able to get some money back, but their business was competing unfairly against the big end of town. Those big stores have the financial

capacity to actually take him on and easily knock him out of the market in the long run. He said that he came to Australia and this was his Australian dream and that he always believed that Australia had a fair-go mentality, which is what the LNP is trying to stand up for here. We are trying to stand up for those small business providers, give them a chance to expand and give them a chance to support our local sporting groups et cetera. That is why I stand 100 per cent with my colleagues on the LNP benches to say that, unfortunately, this is poorly thought out and it will be a great detriment to my local small businesses.