




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Community Services Sector, Jobs

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (10.05 am): I am proud to report to the House the improvements in our community services sector and the new jobs we are creating to support Queensland families. Of course, one of our government's first acts was to remove the Newman government gag clauses that were imposed on the sector so that we can hear their frank advice on what is happening on the front line. We then set about restoring funding to repair the damage done by LNP cuts. Neighbourhood centres, community centres and women's and children's protection services have had their funding increased. Because of that, they have been able to hire more staff and help more Queenslanders. We have rolled out early intervention programs, such as the PPP parenting program, which has already helped more than 50,000 families. We have led the nation in developing a \$25 million better budgeting plan that offers an alternative to payday lenders, delivering two Good Money stores for the Gold Coast and Cairns, as well 27 new financial counsellors across the state. We have set a 50 per cent women-on-boards target that is working, because in two years we have seen the number of women on boards increase. This year we have employed 129 new child safety workers to bring down caseloads, with 119 already on the ground.

However, the greatest sign that the community services sector is back on track is the fact that, over the next decade, it will be one of the biggest drivers for jobs in this state. Last year, I released *Forecasting the future*, which showed a trajectory of 20,000 jobs being created in the community services sector and its contribution to our economy doubling to \$6.3 billion by 2025. We know that initiatives from the Palaszczuk government have directly led to the creation of more than 230 new jobs in our local communities and, over the next six months, we will be creating another 250 real local jobs across all regions, with a particular focus on North Queensland and the north coast.

Our job creation is just one of the reasons our stakeholders and non-government partners have indicated their overwhelming support and back the initiatives of this government. A recent survey of stakeholders who work with my department came back with a 90 per cent satisfaction rating, which is up eight per cent and up from the previous years under the LNP when satisfaction rates were just in the seventies. We have delivered for the community services sector in the past two years and, most importantly, we have delivered all of this with our stakeholders right behind us.