




Speech By
Christopher Whiting

MEMBER FOR BANCROFT

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Space Industry

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (2.55 pm): I can report today that things are looking up for the space industry in Australia and Queensland. The space industry provides a whole new level in advanced manufacturing, and Queensland is leading the nation in the development of space support services. The space industry is part of the knowledge economy and it is already creating the jobs of the 21st and 22nd centuries right here for Queenslanders. Today we have heard that 177,000 Queenslanders' jobs have been created during the term of the Palaszczuk government, and we can help create many more jobs for Queenslanders in this industry. This industry is one that already generates revenues of between \$3 billion and \$4 billion in Australia and it already employs 10,000 people throughout Australia.

The space industry means jobs for Queenslanders. That is the central focus of the space industry inquiry announced by the Minister for State Development last week. I thank him for that opportunity; I am going to be really proud and excited to chair this inquiry. My first task was to attend the space industry forum at the University of Queensland on Tuesday, 11 September, hosted by the Space Industry Association of Australia. I found there the first indication of the enormous jobs and business potential of this industry for Queensland. At that forum, attended by well over 100 Queenslanders, I announced that my plans were to have the first public hearing of that committee at the University of Queensland on Friday, 19 November. I called on them to put in submissions, which are now due by 11 October. I think it is a fitting location as the University of Queensland has been at the centre of space research and education for well over 30 years in this state.

The speakers at this forum spoke of the opportunities that will open up for industry in Queensland. We heard from Ms Pam Melroy, former NASA space shuttle commander and Director of Space Technology and Policy, Nova Systems Australia, who shared her insights into the space industry. She reminded us that Canada had set themselves the task of dominating the robotics part of that industry, and they are well on the way to doing that. She pointed out that in a similar fashion, Queensland and Australia could be world leaders in remote access assets for space given our expertise in mining in harsh conditions and remote mining. There is also an opportunity for Queensland industry to 'space qualify hardware', that is, putting equipment through every possible harsh test before it is sent into space.

We also heard from Dr Jason Armstrong from Boeing Research & Technology in Brisbane, as he described the opportunities with virtual reality labs, centred here in Queensland, that can be used to train personnel for space. We also heard from Professor Michael Smart from the HyShot program and Hypersonics at the University of Queensland, who outlined what Queensland has already achieved with scramjets. For 30 years we have led the world in the development of this new technology which one day will put small payloads into space with reusable rockets. Some of these satellites are just

25 kilograms or smaller in weight. He said that we can expect to see 6,000 launches over the next 10 years around the world for these kinds of instruments. These satellites generally have a life span of two to four years. Honourable members should think about the opportunities that that presents.

At the forum I met so many other Queenslanders who are really keen to develop this industry. Crucially, I found many were educated in Queensland. They want to come back and create their own start-ups and build their businesses. Some have gone on to study at other universities including Harvard, and others have worked at NASA. All believe we can create a space industry right here in Queensland. All these people at the forum wanted to play a role in the inquiry. They want to tell us how Queensland can develop the supply chains for the Australian space industry. At the forum it was very clear that there can be regional opportunities for Queensland from this industry as well. We want to hear where we have space based sensing services and support, data analysis and space system design and manufacturing opportunities here in Queensland.

Let me conclude by pointing out how quickly things are moving in the space industry at the moment. We have to move quickly to capture these job opportunities. We now have a federal space agency that is just 12 weeks old. In Queensland we now have a space industry reference group to guide the development of the Queensland space industry. The inaugural aerospace advisor and chair of the space industry reference group is Air Vice-Marshal (Ret) Neil Hart AM, and he will really help out with our inquiry as well. Let us not forget that the Queensland Aerospace 10-Year Roadmap and Action Plan was launched in June 2018. The space industry means jobs for Queenslanders now and in the future. We are going to make sure we grab these opportunities for all of Queensland.