




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MACKAY

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Endeavour Foundation

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (2.34 pm): Everyone wants to be able to contribute to their community and experience the dignity of sustainable work. In my electorate 72 adults with a wide range of disabilities are doing just that thanks to the Endeavour Foundation's supported work program at its Slade Point workshop. The workshop is celebrating 50 successful years of disability support for adults. The adults are matched to their disability. The jobs performed range from putting strings on safety tags for the mines, forklift driving, warehouse stock control and packing PPE kits for mine sites. These are just some of the modern employment opportunities. They also produce pallets, crates, PVC guideposts for mine haul roads, timber sprags for Mackay Sugar tram lines, sleepers and dunnage.

The motto at the workshop is there is a job for everyone. They match up the skill set of the person to the work. They support employees to develop new skills in a supportive environment. Some supported employees have gained forklift licences, MR truck and car licences. The pine products for pallets were introduced in 2002 and they now produce well over 400 a month. They make and sell an average of 1,000 PVC posts. Over the years the employees have made fishing sinkers, leather goods—wallets, belts, bridles—metal frames for wash truck equipment, timber outdoor furniture, wood framed rubbish bins and bookshelves. Some lucky Mackay residents may still have one of their proudly made garden gnomes, concrete pavers or blast weights.

Monthly the workshop generates about \$280,000 worth of products sold into the local community. The workshop and facilities continue to grow with upgrades, including an extended larger warehouse, a hardstand site, new modern lunch rooms and plans for an industrial kitchen. The Endeavour volunteers, paid support workers and the enthusiastic employees engage with local businesses. They fundraise together with regular sausage sizzles and are engaged in a development program with Mackay's rugby league team, the Mackay Cutters.

To give members some history on how this workshop came to be, in the early years the Endeavour Foundation was set up by an association of parents primarily focused on providing education for their children, but the children grew up and they needed to have employment.