




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Small Business Week

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (10.28 am): Small Business Week kicks off on 28 May and it is a fantastic time to celebrate our diverse and growing small business community. The Palaszczuk government understands that supporting more small businesses creates more jobs for our growing population. Already with our support the number of Queensland small businesses has surged over the past financial year by more than 12,000, and the Palaszczuk government's small business strategy has been growing with them. Already more than 1,700 small businesses have been assisted under our strategy with more than \$6 million in grants to help get their services and products online or expanded into new markets.

Small businesses who have received these grants told us that this support is helping them to create more than 2,200 new jobs. This is on top of the more than 10,000 jobs supported in small businesses through our Back to Work program. Of course we want to continue to do more and help more small businesses create new job opportunities for a growing Queensland. That is why I recently expanded our strategy to include a new Business Growth Fund. The new fund provides up to \$50,000 for a small or medium sized business to help them expand. Support like this will supercharge the future of growing businesses in Queensland.

Already there are so many success stories to showcase during Small Business Week, and tonight I am pleased to join with the Premier and members of this House to welcome more than 100 small businesses to parliament to get an early head start on Small Business Week celebrations. This year we will showcase the stories and passions behind businesses through our new 100 Faces of Small Business campaign, and one of those businesses is She Flies.

She Flies is a Queensland based business which is going global. It supports more women and girls into STEM careers with their drone and STEM education. Last month I had the absolute pleasure to catch up with Dr Catherine Ball, the co-founder of She Flies, to discuss how they are helping empower the next generation of young Queensland girls. They are helping to ensure that, as Queensland's economy and population grow, we also have a growing and skilled workforce ready and able to not just fill but also create the jobs of tomorrow. The Palaszczuk government is unashamedly for small businesses because we know they are helping to power our nation-leading jobs growth. There is no better time to get behind your local small business community than during Small Business Week, and I urge all members of the House to take part.