




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

Record of Proceedings, 15 June 2018

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; REVENUE
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL; BETTING TAX BILL**

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (5.58 pm): The Palaszczuk government has a clear plan to advance Queensland. Providing flexible training and support for small businesses will create jobs and encourage the Queensland economy to flourish. We know Queenslanders will require 21st century skills to thrive in the changing world of work. The Palaszczuk government is investing more than \$770 million in the VET Investment Plan in 2018-19 to give Queenslanders the training and skills to get jobs, stay in work and develop careers.

We are honouring our commitment to boost funding for our highly successful Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative by \$20 million because it works. Jed is a 20-year-old long-term unemployed participant I met recently in Gladstone with the member for Gladstone. Gladstone Engineering Alliance put him on as a trainee under Skilling Queenslanders for Work, supporting him to train in conservation and land management. They were so impressed that they offered Jed a job and now praise him as one of their hardest workers. To continue helping people like Jed, we are extending this initiative for two years with another \$160 million. This program also helps mature age Queenslanders, and we are expanding it to include support for our veteran community.

There is also the \$5 million Trade Skills Assessment and Gap Training Program which is providing a pathway for Queenslanders who already have years of experience but are looking to upskill. We have also announced the \$1 million Advancing Apprentices Fund to work with industry to promote the benefits of employing apprentices. At the election, we pledged to continue rebuilding TAFE as the premier provider of VET, with \$85 million for three years to upgrade campuses at Pimlico in Townsville, Toowoomba, Cairns, Mount Gravatt and in the Gold Coast and Redlands regions. We have also committed to redevelop other TAFE facilities, including a new \$1.5 million fashion hub at Mount Gravatt.

This brings me to our highly successful Back to Work program. This program has helped more than 6,000 businesses employ 13,000 Queenslanders, including more than 3,000 apprentices and trainees. The Back to Work Youth Boost has helped almost 9,000 young people secure jobs, and more than 70 per cent of the applications have been from small businesses. In addition, we will continue the \$9 million Regional Skills Investment Strategy, which ensures that Queenslanders have the skills they need to fill local employment opportunities. We are also ensuring that at least 15 per cent of labour hours on major projects are provided by apprentices and trainees.

The Palaszczuk government has delivered a range of programs to drive small business and grow jobs, and it has worked, with more than 153,000 jobs created since we were first elected. This year is the first budget that has included a small business budget paper, and I am very proud to have highlighted our government initiatives to support small business. We have committed \$1.1 million to establish consultation panels to ensure government departments can access advice from experienced small business owners and operators. We are providing \$1 million to deliver support and mentoring for Queenslanders who want to create a small business. During Small Business Week, I released a

consultation paper to find out how we can better help small business benefit from government procurement. We will continue our highly successful digital grants and entrepreneur grants programs and our Business Growth Fund Program. These programs have helped owners who want to grow their businesses and create jobs for Queenslanders because that is what we are about—jobs.

Turning to my electorate of Waterford where the Palaszczuk government is investing in vital capital works, I welcome a \$1 million upgrade to the health teaching spaces at the Loganlea TAFE. I also welcome the \$135,000 for the Sticking Together program which is helping Logan jobseekers get skills to enter and stay in the workforce. There is also more than \$1 million for education facilities in Waterford, including \$500,000 to begin the project for additional classrooms at Marsden State High School.

Ms Jones: It's a great school.

Ms FENTIMAN: I will take that interjection from the Minister for Tourism; it is a great school. Waterford residents will also benefit from a \$1.8 million upgrade at the Logan Hospital, and planning is well underway for our much needed new maternity ward. I know that residents will also be pleased with the \$19 million upgrade to the Loganlea train station. We will all benefit from our Cross River Rail investment which will halve their commute times from Beenleigh. Many of my constituents travel up and down the M1 daily, so I know how much the Waterford community welcomes the more than \$20 million in significant upgrades to the motorway. In conclusion, this budget underscores the Palaszczuk government's commitment to jobs, jobs and jobs for Queenslanders.