



Speech By  
**Bart Mellish**


**MEMBER FOR ASPLEY**

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## **PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

### **Jobs**

 **Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (2.18 pm): Right now we need a federal government that is focused on jobs growth and boosting flatlining wages growth. The recent federal budget downgraded already low wages growth by 0.25 per cent over the next two financial years, only reaching 3.25 per cent by the end of 2021. This is concerning when you consider that actual wages growth has been below the government's forecast for the past six years. However, the latest ABS labour force data in Queensland for March 2019 included plenty of good news. Our trend unemployment rate was 5.9 per cent in March 2019. That is 0.7 per cent lower than the 6.6 per cent rate we inherited from the previous government.

Since the Palaszczuk government came to office, 192,000 more Queenslanders have found employment, with over 113,000 of those being full-time jobs. Earlier this week we heard the hypocrisy of those opposite saying that they wanted to see more jobs in manufacturing. Of course, sending train contracts to India instead of Maryborough is a sure-fire way to lose manufacturing jobs in Queensland. In fact, had the member for Maryborough not been elected as part of a majority Labor government in 2015 we may not even have much of a rail manufacturing industry left in Queensland.

We also need a federal government that understands Queensland in order to keep this momentum going. The current federal government's recent budget actually had zero dollars in its new Infrastructure Investment Program for the whole of Queensland next financial year. Even the Northern Territory got \$5 million but there was nothing for Queensland. The budget announced major road projects—projects like the Linkfield Road overpass, which has been widely spruiked by government members—but allocated zero dollars over the forward estimates. In order to get funding to even start this project people would have to vote for this government at not only this election but also the one after. Let us not forget that the Morrison government is providing zero dollars for the biggest infrastructure priority in Queensland—Cross River Rail—which represents over 7,000 jobs. It is a great project in terms of the outcomes it will deliver: increased rail capacity and decreased travel times.

People should not think that the lack of investment down here is because the federal government is favouring the regions over South-East Queensland, because it is failing there too. The \$5 billion Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility was talked up in 2015 by its brainchild the former minister for northern Australia, Josh Frydenberg, who is of course now the Treasurer. The fund set up by this Victorian minister for northern Australia has been a disaster from the get-go. Still now, more than three years later, not a single dollar of the \$5 billion fund has been spent in Queensland—not a single dollar, other than for the members of the board, which is stacked with LNP donors. It is little wonder Queensland is fed up with the Morrison government.

This contrasts with the forward-looking jobs industry development focus of the Palaszczuk government and federal Labor opposition. The support of hydrogen as an industry of the future is a great example. It is great to see the Premier and the Minister for State Development and Manufacturing pushing this in particular. This follows on from the development of an entire industry under Labor—the LNG industry—now providing billions in royalties for the people of Queensland. There is little doubt that under the nimby Nats this would not have gone ahead, as it did not in New South Wales.