



Speech By  
**Christopher Whiting**


**MEMBER FOR BANCROFT**

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**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Small Business, Policies**

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (2.39 pm): What we have heard this week is the LNP whinge and whine about the government but we have heard them offer no alternative. It is clear that they have no real plan. All they have are some slogans. They have a dearth of real policies. Queensland needs to know that they have no plans and no ideas. In particular, I want to say today that the LNP are offering nothing new at all for Queensland businesses. They are a policy void, as the member for Maryborough said earlier today.

For example, the LNP have said they would pay contracts up to \$1 million within 20 days instead of 30 days for government suppliers. We are already doing that. We have been doing that since 1 July. The Minister for Small Business announced in May 2019 that small businesses would be paid within 20 days instead of 30. The LNP are way behind us.

Secondly, the LNP have said they want to open up government procurement to Queensland small businesses. We are already doing that. The Buy Queensland policy is already proving very successful. Under Buy Queensland, if your workforce is within 125 kilometres of a job and you are doing the right things by apprentices and trainees, the criteria is going to be weighted in your favour. We are starting to hear some great success stories about Buy Queensland, but the LNP are saying that Buy Queensland does not benefit small business. What I would say is that they need to look at the Food and Beverage Supplier Directory that we introduced. They will find that 224 local suppliers, local small businesses, many based in regional Queensland, now get a chop of the \$100 million worth of catering that the government buys each year.

Thirdly, the LNP have said they want to support young entrepreneurs. We are already doing that. The Palaszczuk government's Ignite Ideas program provides innovators, start-ups and entrepreneurs with the chance to get up to \$200,000 to help them market and commercialise their ideas. Ignite Ideas has supported over 1,000 Queensland jobs. Listen to the LNP's policy on young entrepreneurs: 'We will ignite the spark in Queensland youth.' Does that sound familiar? It should because it is plagiarism. That is the real crisis we are seeing this week; it is plagiarism. What is in that policy of the LNP? A promise for training. Once again, we are already doing that; it is called the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program.

We have examined the meagre LNP policies for small business in Queensland, and indeed they are woeful. They have no plans and no ideas. All they are doing is copying a few of ours. Half of their policies are plagiarised from us. Who would want this mob in government?