




Speech By
Jennifer Howard

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

Record of Proceedings, 2 May 2019

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Education and Training

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (2.36 pm): Queensland's pathway to a thriving economy and improved job growth lies in how much we value the education and training of our young people. Our next federal government must be committed to investing in schools and TAFE because the Queensland economy depends on it and it is the key to growing jobs across Queensland and in my electorate of Ipswich. I am optimistic of Bill Shorten's plan for investing more in education and training, but the Morrison government is falling short. The LNP has abandoned the education and training sectors and, in so doing, it has abandoned future job growth in Queensland. The key to attracting industry investment in Queensland is the education and training of our workforce. Our competitive advantage is our people and it was one of the reasons why Queensland won the Rheinmetall Land 400 phase 2 contract last year and it is why Queensland is now the largest vehicle manufacturer in Australia and provides hundreds of jobs to locals in South-East Queensland including in my electorate of Ipswich. Ipswich needs more jobs to keep up with our population growth, and that is why I will fight to get a fair share of funding for Ipswich when it comes to schools and TAFE.

Scott Morrison's federal budget a few weeks ago abandoned investment in our future economy by looking at cuts to education and training. Queensland schools did not see the restoration of \$2.1 billion in funding that the LNP cut when it abandoned the national education agreement in 2017. In contrast, a Shorten government would give Queensland schools \$650 million over three years starting from January 2020. That is on top of the Queensland government's record \$14.1 billion investment in education and training this financial year and our commitment to employing 3,700 more teachers over the next four years. The LNP has no plan for investing in education for all Australians. It is happy to set up a \$1.2 billion choice and affordability slush fund—

Mr Molhoek interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Order! Pause the clock. Member for Southport, you are making interjections while you are not in your correct seat. You are now warned under the standing orders.

Ms HOWARD: It is happy to set up a slush fund for non-government schools, but a thriving economy relies on all of its citizens, whatever their background, getting an equally high standard of education. I want to make sure that the 13 state schools in the Ipswich electorate are on an equal footing to the seven private schools so that every single student gets the chance to go to university or TAFE and become a highly skilled worker who is in demand by employers.

The LNP also has no plan for training our future workforce through TAFE or apprenticeships. More than \$3 billion has been cut from TAFE and apprenticeships under the federal LNP government. Australia now has 150,000 fewer apprentices and trainees than when Labor was last in government. Our TAFE colleges have been deliberately underfunded and undervalued and enrolments have

plummeted by 24.5 per cent. How can we attract industries to Queensland if we do not have a highly skilled workforce? Companies will just look elsewhere. Our competitive advantage is our world-class education system. Labor governments will always value schools and TAFE because we understand that economic prosperity depends on having a highly skilled and trained workforce.