




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

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ADJOURNMENT

Ipswich Electorate, Small Business Week

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (7.14 pm): Small businesses are at the core of Queensland's economy. They play a key role in driving job growth and keeping our economy strong. Two weeks ago I was pleased to represent Minister Shannon Fentiman at the Ipswich Chamber of Commerce's Regional Business Expo during Small Business Week. At that expo I had the opportunity to connect with local small business operators and sample their innovative products and services. Communities like Ipswich need people with entrepreneurial spirit to breathe fresh life into the business community and I applaud their efforts. I am proud to be a part of a government that supports Queensland's small business community through initiatives such as Small Business Week. It gives businesses the chance to build capacity, develop new skills and access the tools and resources they need to succeed.

Small Business Week is a celebration of Queensland's small business sector—a sector that contributes around \$113 billion to our economy each year and employs around 44 per cent of the private sector workforce in Queensland. Small Business Week offers grant funding to individuals and organisations to run events and workshops such as the Regional Business Expo in Ipswich that I attended and the innovative masterclass on the circular economy hosted by the Ipswich City Council. I want to take a moment to thank the Ipswich Chamber of Commerce and the Ipswich City Council for offering local businesses these opportunities to network, learn and grow.

I have long been a proud supporter of small business in Ipswich and I want them to thrive. Businesses in Ipswich such as 4 Hearts Brewing Co., the Prince Alfred Hotel, Terry White chemist in the mall, Heisenberg Haus, Strictly Coffee and Rafter & Rose are not just business ventures; they are part of the Ipswich community. Going to these businesses is like catching up with an old friend. The owners and workers know you, they take time to chat with you, ask about your family, your pets and they provide you with personalised service that you just do not get with big-name franchises in Ipswich. Furthermore, these businesses are resilient and have weathered some particularly tough economic conditions in Ipswich. The Ipswich CBD has suffered a protracted downturn over the last two years due to significant construction delays with the Nicholas Street mall. Unfortunately, those delays have caused some small businesses to close down. In a town like Ipswich, a business closure can feel like a personal loss. However, I know that we are resilient enough to bounce back. We are a town of budding entrepreneurs, with small businesses making up 98 per cent of all businesses in Ipswich.

The Palaszczuk government is making it easier for small businesses by removing barriers that hinder entrepreneurialism and success. To this end, I want to congratulate the Treasurer, the Premier and Minister Fentiman on their announcement in yesterday's budget on changes to payroll tax. Businesses will welcome the payroll tax exemption threshold increasing to \$1.3 million and the rebate for adding more full-time employees. These incentives will reduce costs for small businesses, boost productivity and grow local jobs. Our government is committed to creating the right conditions for small businesses to invest in themselves and succeed, and by doing so we are investing in Queensland's economic success.