




Speech By
Jessica Pugh

MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY

Record of Proceedings, 18 September 2019

ADJOURNMENT

Mount Ommaney Electorate, Small Business

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (7.09 pm): Mr Deputy Speaker, as a former small business manager and an avid foodie, can I say at the outset how much I really enjoyed being in your beautiful home of Townsville last sitting week. It was so great to experience firsthand the collection of eateries that Townsville has to offer. My father, David Pugh, would often attend the wonderful Chefs in the North event in his previous life as a chef and restaurant owner. It is so wonderful to see that the Townsville small business and hospitality scene continues to grow and thrive.

In that vein, I am excited to report that the Mount Ommaney Small Business Awards are once again on the horizon. In recent weeks I have met with the new president of the Centenary Chamber of Commerce, Ada from Silver Dove, a number of times. Can I say how exciting her enthusiasm for her new role is. With her team Adam, Lisa, Louise and Gaye, I can see that there are big plans to grow the chamber following on from the wonderful work of former president, Keith Hamilton. Keith has recently stepped down as president after many years of hard work to grow the chamber. He has done a wonderful job, and I want to thank him here in the people's house for his many years of service to the small business community.

Members of the House may recall that last year I hosted my first Mount Ommaney Small Business Awards, and what an exciting night it was. Minister Fentiman attended, and Milton Dick, my good friend the member for Oxley, was emcee. We launched this year's event last week with two events: one at White Lies Brewing and one at last year's overall winning venue, Just Poppy's. Lots of awesome local businesses showed up to collect their packs, including: Peta from Ageless Women's Fitness; Lissy from the Middle Park newsagent, who sold the winning lottery ticket last week, might I add; and Gav Skill from All Year Pest Solutions.

I am so proud of our government's record for small business. This year's budget was welcome news for small business, and payroll tax cuts from \$1.1 million to \$1.3 million per year is music to the ears of many small to medium enterprises in Mount Ommaney. Indeed, Bill Gaydon of Australian Fundraising in Spine Street contacted me to let me know that this cut meant he would be looking to hire more staff now so he can grow his business. But we are not stopping there. We are backing it up with free TAFE. Chefs, early childhood educators and many more qualifications are in high demand, and our government is helping young people get those jobs of the future.

I vividly remember at Restaurant II just how tricky it was to attract and retain skilled and qualified chefs. This will make it easier for venues like the one I used to work at to give our Queensland kids a job. I am so proud of our government's commitment to small business, and it is wonderful to have a Minister for Small Business who shares my passion. I certainly will not stop listening to, and advocating for, the businesses in my electorate and the wonderful locals they employ.