




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

Record of Proceedings, 14 June 2019

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; REVENUE
AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (3.03 pm): The Palaszczuk government has delivered a budget to create jobs across Queensland, building on over 200,000 jobs created since 2015. I want to thank the Deputy Premier and Treasurer for delivering this budget with a clear vision for Queensland. We have made job creation the No. 1 priority. This is why this budget is delivering \$885 million in payroll tax relief to help small businesses create jobs.

From 1 July we are increasing the tax-free threshold from \$1.1 million to \$1.3 million which will mean 1,500 additional businesses will no longer pay any payroll tax. We are also introducing a one per cent regional discount which will boost regional economies by over \$300 million. Queensland already has one of the lowest payroll tax rates of any state in the country and this will make it even easier to do business here in Queensland.

Speaking to businesses right across our state, I know what this package means. Noel from Townsville said the Palaszczuk government's new payroll package will mean his bowling business now falls below the threshold and he can afford to take on additional full-time staff.

I note the member for Nanango believes that we have somehow stolen the LNP's policy which in fact drip-fed payroll tax relief to businesses over a decade. The LNP's \$100 million policy was a complete flop. Our \$885 million policy is, as described, 'The jewel in the crown of the jobs budget.' Thank you Nick Behrens. No small business needs to wait 10 years to see these changes. Under our Labor government they are happening in full next month.

This budget also contains another \$4 million in small business grants funding to help small businesses upgrade their digital presence or to grow and employ more staff. This is on top of the \$12 million we have already provided to over 2,000 small businesses.

A clear priority of our government is ensuring that all Queenslanders have access to the skills and training they need to get a job and build a career. In the skills and training portfolio this budget is delivering almost \$1 billion to ensure we are skilling Queenslanders for the jobs of the future.

Labor delivered free TAFE and I am incredibly proud that this budget ensures we continue funding this program. Earlier this year I visited the Southport campus and met Kendra and Nan, who were completing a certificate III in hospitality thanks to free TAFE. Kendra told me how much the initiative meant to her and that without it her family would not have been able to afford the course. The 2019-20 budget will double the investment in capital works at TAFE with over \$105 million to renew, refurbish and expand our training facilities. At campuses like Alexandra Hills we are making the biggest investment in 32 years so that more students can complete their apprenticeships locally.

We also understand the need to partner with industry, which is why under this budget we will establish a higher level apprenticeship pilot to develop new ways to acquire specialised skills and knowledge through the traditional apprenticeship model. We are investing \$5.5 million in a microcredentialing project to support employers and workers gain the skills they need to adapt to the changing world of work.

The successful Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative will continue and assist a further 10,000 with \$80 million in funding. We have already assisted over 40,000 Queenslanders through this program and over half of them are now in a job as a result. I am incredibly proud of this program.

We are also continuing our incredibly successful Back to Work program, which will receive an additional \$14 million. This program has created nearly 20,000 jobs in Queensland. It is for people like Cole, whom I met recently in Cairns. With the help of Back to Work, he is now undertaking a welding apprenticeship at a local small business.

As the local member for Waterford, I am also pleased to see this budget delivering for my community. We are building a better M1 for Logan. We are delivering more lanes on the M1 between Eight Mile Plains and Daisy Hill and extending the busway. Over \$800 million is committed so that Waterford residents can spend less time in traffic and more time with their families. This budget also includes important upgrades for local schools, including \$16 million for upgrades to 17 classrooms at Marsden State High School. Principal Andrew Peach and his fantastic team are delivering incredible results and this much needed funding will help them meet future demand.

Beyond the classroom we are also investing over \$3 million into Loganlea TAFE which will help upgrade facilities and support the expansion of our nursing training and veterinary nursing. This budget also delivers \$460 million for the Logan Hospital, including \$18 million for a much needed upgrade to the maternity ward. After visiting midwives at the hospital, I know how crucial these upgrades are and the impact they will have on local mums in the Waterford community. There is also a new mental health unit and subacute ward to significantly boost bed capacity—overall, 206 new beds.

This is a budget for all Queenslanders—a budget that promotes at its core the belief that all Queenslanders deserve access to skills and training, the skills they need to participate in our economy and reach their full potential; a budget that partners with industry to help ensure we are skilling Queenslanders not only for the jobs of today but also for the jobs of the future. This is a budget about jobs and it is delivering in spades.