




Speech By
Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

Record of Proceedings, 16 June 2020

MOTION

Coronavirus, Economic Response

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (3.31 pm): This motion is yet another example of how the parliament is being mistreated by this Labor government. This morning we were told that we had a total of two hours to speak on two very important pieces of legislation. No doubt as we get to the final bills that we will debate this week they will be guillotined and cut short, yet we can allocate a full hour for the government to pat itself on the back for belatedly doing the job it was elected to do. There is nothing in this motion that this government should not have been on the front foot and delivered weeks if not months ago.

Let us look at the small business adaptation grant. Talk about pain and misery for the small business sector across my electorate of Glass House and, indeed, Queensland. As others have said, it should have been there months ago. When it did arrive there was only \$100 million and it was closed off in the space of three or four days while many businesses were still gathering the data that they needed to comply with the application process. I cannot tell members the number of emails I have received from small business owners who are distraught that they missed out when they finally thought there was an opportunity for them to have a lifeline during this COVID health and economic crisis.

Those opposite talk about agricultural sector initiatives. Here is a couple for them: build water supply. They have adopted every other LNP policy; adopt that one and stop regulating the agriculture sector into the ground. There is talk about the development of new economy minerals. We all know that that is only possible because the member for South Brisbane is no longer the treasurer and in charge of the economy here in this state. The fact that they are even allowed to use the words 'minerals' or 'coal' is only because she no longer sits in cabinet.

I have a couple of other suggestions. As other speakers on this side have said, open the borders. Give certainty to our tourism operators, to our hospitality sector, so that they can start to prepare for an influx of southern tourists. We need those borders open. We need to know when that is occurring. The Premier squibbed it again as recently as this morning in giving that clear direction. I have another suggestion: support the wedding industry. I have only just been told, four weeks after it was asked of the Premier, that they are not going to accept the wedding industry's COVID-safe plan. They have been told they have to operate under a tourism or a hospitality plan. We all know they are different. They have given the relaxation to the funeral industry so loved ones can grieve. Let us give the wedding industry the same opportunity so that loved ones can celebrate. This motion is an indication that this government has no control, has no plan, has no idea.