




Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

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MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance; Sorensen, Mr T

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): The last time that this House met, I discussed the economic pain that was being inflicted on Queenslanders because of the government's border shambles. I am surprised that, four weeks later, we are here again and the border shambles is still going on. Every day the confusion caused by this government is closing businesses and costing jobs. The Prime Minister of Australia, Scott Morrison, has made it clear that we must open Queensland to the rest of Australia and that we must tell the rest of Australia when that will happen. This great state of ours is a tourism state and we need tourists, because, of course, tourists mean jobs. Where are those jobs located? They are on the Gold Coast, in the Far North, in the Whitsundays, on the Sunshine Coast, in North Queensland, in the outback and in the South Burnett and Somerset regions—all of those beautiful parts of Queensland and everywhere else in between.

Queenslanders have flattened the curve and the Palaszczuk government must stop flattening our economy. Businesses need certainty. They need clarity about when the borders will be opened so that they can plan their way out of this economic crisis. The Palaszczuk Labor government must commit to opening the borders in July, as the road map has stated. The Premier refuses to rule out the possibility that our borders will remain closed until September or even longer. The Premier needs to stop playing politics with this issue and start focusing on people, because people's lives are being turned upside down by this crisis.

In the past few weeks we have heard a lot of talk about bubbles, be it a North Queensland travel bubble, a bubble with South Australia or even a bubble with New Zealand. However, the real problem that Queensland has is the Labor bubble, which is the bubble that this government lives in. We know that the ministers and the government are so out of touch that they buy investment properties on their smartphones. While they are building up their property portfolios, the jobs of ordinary Queenslanders are disappearing.

The Palaszczuk government is a threat to the tens of thousands of jobs in our tourism industry. We urgently need the dollars that interstate tourists bring to Queensland. They spend a lot of dollars right here in Queensland. To give the House some figures, every year interstate tourists spend \$2.35 billion on the Gold Coast, \$2.3 billion in Brisbane, \$1.48 billion in Far North Queensland, \$1 billion on the Sunshine Coast, \$312 million in the Whitsundays, \$218 million in North Queensland and \$188 million on the Fraser Coast. You cannot rip billions of dollars out of the tourism industry without destroying tens of thousands of jobs. It is time to stop flattening the economy. It is time to reopen our borders. Queensland can recover from this crisis, but first the Palaszczuk government has to get out of way.

Mr Deputy Speaker, as you know I am from regional Queensland and I am proud of it. My team fights for the regions because we listen to the regions. My deputy leader, Tim Mander, and I spent last week on the road, travelling from Far North Queensland to Townsville. Along the way we met hundreds

of people who have a simple message for this government: stop flattening the economy. In Cairns I met Paul Harris, who runs Uncle Brian's bus tours.

Government members interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: The poor guy has had to lose 11 staff, and those opposite laugh. There are barely any tourists in Cairns. If the Palaszczuk government ministers and the Premier left the tarmac to speak to people in Cairns, they would know how much they are hurting. They are so out of touch. They have one or two people lined up to meet them. Did they go into Mackay and actually talk to the people? No, they did not! They jumped in and out. It is an absolute disgrace, but the good thing is that the people have seen through the Palaszczuk government. They have seen through those jokers opposite who actually think it is funny to get in a taxpayer funded jet and pop into a town for half an hour, making their way across Queensland but never once listening to the heartbreaking stories of business owners who are worried about their colleagues.

Mr Mander: The Treasurer is laughing.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: People are thinking of taking their lives. They are thinking of taking their lives, Treasurer, so you can sit there and joke as much as you like!

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! Leader of the Opposition, I ask you to direct your comments through the chair.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It does distress me and the people I met on that trip are distressed. Yes, they want to keep Queensland safe, but this is about their livelihoods. I see the member grin. I ask him to please not do it; it is embarrassing for him.

We met people such as Sharyn and Alan at the Ingham Royal Hotel. They said that I was one of their first regulars to come back. Chris Crowe's Rollingstone caravan park is at 13 per cent capacity. At this time of year, that park should be at 100 per cent or, at the very least, at 80 per cent capacity. In Townsville, at the Banyo Paterson Motor Inn the feisty Annette Langdon is definitely not laughing at the Palaszczuk government. Her business made it through the floods and she told us that now she is trying to encourage the Palaszczuk government to listen to business owners such as herself and her fiancé. There are no people staying in their motel because the borders are not open, but out of their own pockets they are paying two staff members as they use the last of their money to try to renovate their motel. I can tell the House that theirs was a sad story, so let us hope that this government starts listening. The people of Queensland deserve a government that backs them, that listens to them and that actually stands up for them, instead of just playing politics with people's lives. The list goes on and on.

While I was in Cairns, it was fascinating to hear about the debacle that is the Cairns Convention Centre, which is being built under Annastacia Palaszczuk's watch. The Palaszczuk Labor government refuses to let in southern tourists, but they will let southern construction companies build a Far North Queensland convention centre. In Townsville, the crime crisis goes on and on. We have seen the fatal consequences of that crisis with four young lives wasted, a community living in fear and police hamstrung by the Palaszczuk government. It is no wonder that the people of Cairns and Townsville are desperate for a change. I repeat: it is no wonder that people are looking for a change. That is why the LNP and my team have an economic plan to get Queensland out of the disastrous state that we have been in under the Palaszczuk government. Our plan includes the new Bradfield scheme, building the second M1, empowering our regions and securing our children's future. It is important that we have a decade of secure jobs going into the future.

Finally, I am sure that everyone in this House would like to pay tribute to the member for Hervey Bay. After serving the people of Hervey Bay for 27 years as a councillor, a mayor and then a member of parliament, Ted Sorensen has announced that he is stepping down at the next state election. He will be sorely missed by everyone in the LNP team. I know that his community of Hervey Bay will also miss him. Ted has played a central role in the development of Hervey Bay, bringing about better health services, better schools and a better airport for his community. He has served Queensland with distinction. We give him our love and our thanks. I wish him and Paula, their children and grandchildren all the very best for the future. Thank you, Ted, from all of us.