



Speech By
Melissa McMahon

MEMBER FOR MACALISTER

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Macalister Electorate, Small Business

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (2.28 pm): In the electorate of Macalister we support small. Our small businesses, particularly in the hub that is Beenleigh—the once trading post between Brisbane and the Gold Coast—are the backbone of our community. They are our first employers, our training providers and our school and sporting team sponsors.

It was quite eerie to be in the middle of Beenleigh at the height of the pandemic—no cars, no pedestrians and few doors open on Main Street. While our tradies and construction teams continued relatively unscathed, our hospitality sector was adversely affected and our beauty service industry bore the brunt in the early days. Through the grim smiles over coffee with business owners in the mornings I saw determination, flexibility and agility.

As a community, the call went out to support our small businesses. I established an online forum for local businesses to communicate how they were continuing to operate under the changing conditions and let people know that they were still open for business. Hundreds of locals are now on this forum, keeping up to date and supporting small.

I was personally doing my best to support our local hospitality businesses—shouting coffee for our local police station at Luv a Coffee, a morning tea for our teachers at Kastury's and lunch orders at Far East, the golf club, Sweet as Brew, 7 Seas, Mac from Way Back, Georges Grill, the Local Fisho and many more. I am quite glad the May 50K was on otherwise I would be up for a new wardrobe. Unfortunately, my hairdresser has still not reopened, much to the distress of many in the local area.

Some of our businesses have taken the opportunity to apply for small business grants. So far, three of our local small businesses have received grants of up to \$10,000 under the small business grant program. It is great to see them taking up that opportunity. In the last hour we finished a forum with the Minister for Small Business. We got to talk with our local businesses, and they had the opportunity to ask questions about the next round of grants opening on 1 July and the kinds of things they can use the small business grant for.

A number of businesses are waiting on the QRIDA application process. They are 100 per cent on board with a number of the initiatives that our government has provided to assist small businesses during this time. I would like to not only thank our small businesses for showing the flexibility and agility to continue to operate during this time but also our community for going out of its way to support our small businesses—to eat out more often. I give a shout-out to Roceel's for the crazy shake for my son.