




Speech By
Ann Leahy

MEMBER FOR WARREGO

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MOTION

Tourism Industry, Support

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (4.32 pm): I agree with the member for Toowoomba South. The members opposite must know that something is coming because they are up there trying to cover up their poor record, their woeful record, when it comes to tourism. Queensland used to be the jewel in the crown of Australia's tourism. Long before coronavirus, the other states were powering ahead and experiencing a tourism boom. Queensland failed to keep pace and lost valuable jobs under this Labor government. Remember, they have been in government for six years but they are blaming the federal government for their poor record.

The official tourism data shows that before coronavirus Queensland lost its domestic share of visitor nights and visitor spend. Queensland had the second lowest growth in domestic visitor numbers and domestic visitor spend in the nation, only outranking Tasmania. That is so embarrassing under this government. Under Labor, Queensland slipped from being the second most visited state in the nation for international tourists to a distant third after New South Wales and Victoria. That is what has happened to tourism under this government.

This government has spent millions on consultants for proposed global tourism hubs in Cairns and the Gold Coast and they have delivered nothing, but government members say to the federal government, 'You've got to go out there and look after everything.' Well, the state government has some heavy lifting to do as well. This Labor government has only spent \$8.8 billion on its COVID stimulus. That is a third of what the federal government has invested in Queensland.

The state government could also do something about the insurance crisis in North Queensland with the high cost of insurance in North Queensland. We see businesses close, like the barra farm in North Queensland—not because they do not have people coming to their facility but because they cannot get public liability insurance, and this government has done nothing to address that. In North Queensland the cost of body corporate insurance is high and it is actually making the body corporates and the units uncompetitive with other areas across Australia. This government has done nothing to help those accommodation providers.

We know that this government is just following the lead of the member for Buderim and the opposition leader who were up in Cairns. They were the ones who convened the local industry stakeholders to talk about getting grants to get kids across to the reef. It was the Leader of the Opposition who wrote to the government and asked them to fund the initiative. More needs to be done, but I do not see any mention here in relation to outback tourism. That seems to have dropped off the radar from this government.