




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

Record of Proceedings, 14 September 2021

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Retail Sector; Trading Hours, Parliamentary Inquiry

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.53 am): I actually think that is a statement the Minister for Racing should have delivered! We all acknowledge the vital role the retail sector has played during a world health pandemic. Queenslanders would not have been able to access basic necessities, if it were not for the dedication of our retail workers and shop owners. They have shown great adaptability and resilience over the past 18 months in dealing with the reality of working during a world health pandemic to continue to serve our community as safely as possible, in spite of an unforeseen run on toilet paper.

The Palaszczuk government has always committed to ensuring we strike the right balance between creating greater consumer choice while providing protections for retail workers and certainty for retail businesses. That is why in 2016 Queensland's Trading (Allowable Hours) Act 1990 was reviewed. Following former Speaker John Mickel's independent review, we introduced historic red-tape-cutting trading hour reforms. The number of trading hours zones was reduced from around 100 to just 12, and a five-year moratorium was introduced to allow the act to take effect. These changes simplified trading hours arrangements and provided a stable retail environment allowing retailers of all sizes to best service their customers' needs—a victory for common sense, jobs and the economy.

As we approach the end of the five-year moratorium that ends on 31 August 2022, I am pleased to advise that during this parliamentary sitting an inquiry into the effectiveness of the moratorium and the operation of the Trading (Allowable Hours) Act 1990 will be referred to the parliamentary Education, Employment and Training Committee, chaired by the member for Redlands, Kim Richards. The committee will be asked to consider the impacts of the amendments made by the Trading (Allowable Hours) Amendment Act 2017, including obtaining stakeholder feedback and the ongoing role of the independent tribunal, the QIRC. Amendments to the trading hours act provided much needed certainty for this industry and retail workers in Queensland, and I am confident the parliamentary committee's inquiry will build on this great work. This timely parliamentary inquiry will ensure that Queensland's trading hours act and regulations will continue to support Queensland businesses and the communities they serve, particularly in our vibrant tourism and remote and rural locations throughout this great state.