



Speech By  
**Jessica Pugh**


**MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY**

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Record of Proceedings, 27 October 2021

**MOTION**

**Queensland Building and Construction Commission**

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (5.17 pm): I will start by saying something that those opposite never will: I am really proud of Queensland's construction industry and I back the 230,000 jobs supported by Queensland's construction industry. I am disappointed that yet again the LNP is out to talk down that industry and those jobs. Every piece of infrastructure in my community has been built under a framework from Queensland's independent regulator, the QBCC, from the new classrooms at Centenary State High School—and there is more to come—and the Sumners Road Interchange Upgrade that I spoke about earlier today to the new housing community in Oxley. Every one of those projects is being delivered in such a way that tradies and subbies are paid fairly for the work that they do and they get to go home to their families safely. I think we can all agree that there is nothing more important than that. Queensland's construction industry is strong and so is its regulator.

I am really proud of the fact that more Queensland women are picking up the tools and hard hats for trade careers—women such as Susie Q from my community. She started her own painting company in Mount Ommaney about five years ago and is now training the next generation of lady tradies. Her business has been nominated in my small business awards. I never miss an opportunity to get in a brag.

Those opposite were happy to sit by when female participation in construction sat at two per cent. We do not have enough time to go through the LNP's problems with women, but since the Palaszczuk government's election in 2015 that number has doubled and now sits at around five per cent. There are 13,500 Queensland women in frontline trade roles and more than 800 currently in trade apprenticeships.

As someone with two daughters, I want them to grow up knowing that they can be whatever they want to be, but you cannot be what you cannot see. We have come a long way as a state in advancing women in construction, but we can do more. Our government will continue to step up and lead from the front because women belong on the front line of construction. We proved that with the Cannon Hill Exemplar project, a product of our government's strong partnership with the National Association of Women in Construction. Thirty-one per cent of the workers on that \$7 million project were women. Twenty-two per cent were on the front line as plumbers, electricians and painters. There were architects, engineers, admin and professional services, proving that gender targets are achievable. I note that Minister de Brenni has announced that the next Women in Construction Exemplar project will be in Hervey Bay. I am very confident that this project will allow us to build on what we have already achieved and will drive us to where we want this industry to be for women.

We have also recently appointed Queensland's first female Government Architect in former Gold Coast City architect Leah Lang. I know that there will be many aspiring Queensland women architects, engineers, designers and builders who will follow in Leah's footsteps as leaders in Queensland's construction industry. This is all possible because Queensland's construction industry is strong and our independent regulator is strong. While those opposite will never admit that, on behalf of the 230,000 Queenslanders working in it I think the LNP should stop talking them down by undermining and exploiting it. Our tradies, and our female tradies especially, deserve better.