




Speech By
Hon. Meaghan Scanlon

MEMBER FOR GAVEN

Record of Proceedings, 10 March 2021

MOTION

Tourism Industry, Support

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (4.42 pm): I rise to support the motion put forward by the Premier and to touch on some of the comments made by the member for Buderim about responsibility. It was of course the responsibility of this Premier to put the health of Queenslanders first, and it was reckless of those opposite to call for the borders to be opened 64 times at the height of the global pandemic, which would have sent Queensland's economic recovery backwards. It is ridiculous to suggest that this side of government does not have responsibility when it comes to this pandemic.

We, of course, support the federal government in the closure of international borders. It is the right decision in making sure we are keeping Australians safe. We also, of course, supported the introduction of JobKeeper; the ACTU and federal Labor were calling for a wage subsidy. What we know is that the closure of international borders is having an impact, particularly on communities like mine on the Gold Coast.

Last term I had the privilege of being the assistant minister for tourism and meeting many of these businesses. When we look at the figures we see that in the year ending 2019 there were over one million international visitors who travelled to the Gold Coast. While we support the measures that have been put in place to date, there is no doubt that these measures are having an impact on businesses and locals.

In that December quarter over 49,000 residents on the Gold Coast alone were on JobKeeper. There are many families and individuals who rightfully are wanting to know what will happen at the end of this month; people want to know whether they will have money to put food on the table. I think that it is reasonable to expect that the federal government will let people know whether JobKeeper will continue or whether targeted support will continue. That is a reasonable expectation I think of people given the climate that we are in.

Those opposite have also talked about responsibility. Of course, during the pandemic our government put in place a number of measures to support individuals and businesses. We brought in payroll tax relief, small business loans and small business grants. We provided payroll tax relief and electricity rebates. We also brought forward infrastructure investment. We brought forward infrastructure investment on the Gold Coast like the second M1, which we are funding on a 50/50 basis. The federal government receives 80 per cent of the taxation revenue in this country but we are putting 50 per cent on the table.

We are delivering more funding for the light rail than the federal government is. We are also delivering those important M1 upgrades on the southern Gold Coast and going to Brisbane as well. We are doing a lot of heavy lifting ourselves when it comes to injecting our economy to make sure people

remain in work. What we need is the federal government to act. There are 10 LNP members on the Gold Coast sitting opposite who are very vocal about state border closures but very silent when it comes to international borders and the support the federal government should be providing post March.

(Time expired)