



Speech By  
**Hon. Meaghan Scanlon**


**MEMBER FOR GAVEN**

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Record of Proceedings, 25 March 2021

**MOTION**

**JobKeeper**

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (3.46 pm): I appreciate following the member for Surfers Paradise. Last year he was one of many Gold Coast members of parliament who were very vocal on state borders and the impact our strong health measures were having on tourism operators but who are very quiet when it comes to the federal government's decision to keep international borders closed and the impact of discontinuing JobKeeper.

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Ms SCANLON:** I can hear the interjections from those opposite and I want to be clear: this government absolutely supports the federal government's decision to keep international borders closed. We have been very clear that we prioritise the health of Queenslanders at every opportunity, unlike those opposite who called for the borders to be opened 64 times at the height of the pandemic. Had that been expanded across our state it would have had a much heavier consequence on tourism operators.

Ten Gold Coast LNP members of this parliament spent 20 minutes trying to avoid talking about the fact that JobKeeper will stop on Sunday. When we consider the impact that that will have on the Gold Coast, I think that is pretty poor form. Eight of the 10 postcodes in Queensland with the highest number of JobKeeper recipients are on the Gold Coast. At the end of December 49,000 families and individuals were receiving JobKeeper and on Sunday they will have no idea how they will keep the lights on and put food on the table.

I heard the member for Broadwater talk about our government taking responsibility. I remind him that under the Newman government they cut \$180 million from the tourism sector. That is in stark contrast to this government, which was heavily investing before COVID and afterwards. I heard the member for Surfers Paradise talking about commercial tenancy. We have provided a number of initiatives for commercial operators. We have delivered funds such as payroll tax relief and electricity rebates. We have provided small business loans and small business grants. We have also provided industry support package funding.

I recall just before the election the member for Nanango criticising us for supporting big employers such as theme parks. We have provided \$11 million of tourism icon funding to Gold Coast theme parks and operators. We have provided international tourism adaptation grants for individuals and companies that we know are heavily reliant on international tourists.

I want to respond to some comments made by the member for Broadwater, particularly around the state government's measures compared to the federal government. It is a fact that the federal government gets 80 per cent of the taxation revenue in this country, so it is entirely appropriate that it should be rolling out initiatives to support individuals in this state if it wants to keep international borders closed. We agree with that, but we need to help those individuals.