




Speech By
Michael Healy

MEMBER FOR CAIRNS

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MOTION

JobKeeper

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (3.28 pm): The federal government ending JobKeeper on Sunday is a huge concern for so many industries and so many people, particularly those people involved in the tourism industry. It is concerning and there are foundations to believe that the Prime Minister has absolutely no idea of the impact this will have across many regions.

In our tourism regions 23.4 per cent of businesses on the Gold Coast, 20 per cent of businesses in the Tropical North and 12.1 per cent of businesses in the Whitsundays are reliant on JobKeeper. Operators in these regions are heavily reliant on international visitation and remain on the edge of closing their doors. We know that those businesses that are operating in the domestic sector are starting to show some good signs of recovery and are doing well. This is a very particular group. Operators in these regions need assistance. The end of JobKeeper will have significant impacts for employment and business viability across many tourism regions in our state.

While the Morrison government plans to make 244,000 Queenslanders unemployed on Sunday, the Palaszczuk government has been taking action—contrary to what we hear—to support tourism businesses in regions that have been heavily reliant on JobKeeper. In the last few weeks the Palaszczuk government has announced numerous programs to support the tourism industry, including 15,000 \$200 travel vouchers to spend on tourism experiences in Cairns and the Far North; \$1 million to give \$150 subsidies to 6,500 Queensland students to explore the reef; subsidies to attract national business conferences with more than 350 delegates to Queensland; a long-term strategic action plan for tourism recovery led by a reference panel of industry heavyweights Liz Savage, Andrew McEvoy and Brett Godfrey; \$12.2 million to the Good to Go marketing campaign to encourage Queenslanders and southerners to go on holidays in Queensland; and today the minister announced very much needed economic advice and support to Queensland tourist businesses facing hardship with Sunday's axing of JobKeeper.

The government has committed \$25 million to the Queensland Tourism Icons Program; \$25 million to the Growing Tourism Infrastructure Fund; \$15 million to support key regional airports as well as negotiate new aviation agreements to support regional areas; \$5 million for the COVID International Tourism Adaptation Grant program; \$174 million for tourism related businesses offered through the industry support program; \$137 million in approved loans for 952 tourism businesses under the Small Business COVID-19 Jobs Support Loans Scheme; \$77.9 million in Small Business COVID-19 Adaptation Grants—and those opposite think we are not making an effort here?