




Speech By
Hon. Dr Steven Miles
MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

Record of Proceedings, 10 March 2021

MOTION

Tourism Industry, Support

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning) (4.11 pm): Yesterday the federal Treasurer went to Cairns for the first time in a thousand days. Can you imagine? Worse still, he went there empty-handed. Today he is in Brisbane, but he is not here to outline plans to support Queensland's ongoing economic recovery. He is here for an LNP fundraiser—a \$990-a-head LNP fundraiser. We can work out whose job he is interested in keeping—his own and that of his colleagues.

It is now 355 days since Queensland has welcomed international tourists to our shores, and the towns that rely on international tourism—in particular, Cairns, the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast—continue to struggle. Closing the borders was the right thing to do, and we supported it. The Premier just said so again. It allowed us, as other comparable nations dealt with their second, third and now fourth waves—places like the US and UK—to open up the rest of our economy, and that has been very successful. JobKeeper has been effective, and we have supported it throughout.

Now we face the sudden end of JobKeeper while segments of the economy remain greatly exposed. The federal government is responsible for closing international borders and the federal government needs to step in and provide ongoing support. There are 259,000 Queenslanders currently on JobKeeper—49,000 of them are on the Gold Coast, largely represented by those opposite, and 16,600 are in Cairns. They are people and families who are worried about putting food on the table for their kids and who feel abandoned right now and fear they will be abandoned. Similarly, from the perspective of our wider economy, we cannot afford for those tourism products—the attractions, the products that we sell overseas—to disappear. They take decades to build up. We cannot afford to lose them all, so there is a great interest in maintaining and supporting that sector.

If they are worried about how to fund it, maybe they can claw back the \$6 million that Gerry Harvey rorted out of JobKeeper. There is no Robodebt for their big millionaire supporters, no 'DobSeeker', no hotline to call in. Gerry Harvey just bought a new horse called *The Quick One*. It certainly feels like that is what he has pulled on taxpayers. Those opposite might not be able to work out whether they support this motion, but everyone on this side does because we care about those people lying awake at night.

(Time expired)