




Speech By
Bruce Saunders

MEMBER FOR MARYBOROUGH

Record of Proceedings, 18 August 2022

**TRADING (ALLOWABLE HOURS) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT
BILL**

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (12.29 pm): Of course the Palaszczuk government always brings the bacon home! That is one thing we do all the time. While the member for Nanango was speaking I was sitting here drooling, because I do not mind bacon and eggs in the morning. Thank you, member for Nanango, for putting me off my game today. I will make sure I get to the BaconFest.

I rise to speak to the Trading (Allowable Hours) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. This is deja vu because five years ago I was on the committee that looked at shopping hours and we transformed shopping hours in Queensland. The member for Nudgee was the chair of the education committee at the time. I remember being on that committee. Those opposite thought the world was going to stop spinning and the earth was going to change. Nothing has happened like that. In fact, it has been pretty good.

I heard the member for Buderim talk the other day about small business operators. I have a lot of history in small business, so I think I do know what I am talking about when it comes to small business. The unemployment rate in Queensland is 3.8 per cent today. I congratulate the Treasurer, the Premier and the cabinet—3.8 per cent. In the middle of a pandemic and coming out of a pandemic we are getting figures like that! That is what keeps small businesses going—everyone has a job. I go back to the Borbidge-Sheldon era. I do not know that many on that side will want to talk about the Borbidge-Sheldon era.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Pause the clock. Member for Maryborough, I bring you back to the bill.

Mr SAUNDERS: I am going back to the bill, Mr Deputy Speaker. I am talking about confidence in small business. They are talking about shopping hours. I am talking about confidence.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Get back to the bill, member for Maryborough.

Mr SAUNDERS: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, for your guidance. We are talking about confidence in small businesses. That is what keeps small businesses going. When there are low unemployment figures like today—3.8 per cent—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Maryborough, I ask you to come back to the bill, otherwise I will ask you to resume your seat. Come back to the bill please.

Mr SAUNDERS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I am coming back to the bill. I am talking about confidence in small business with trading hours.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Maryborough, that sounded a bit like a reflection on the chair. I ask you to come back to the bill, otherwise I will sit you down. Come back to the bill.

Mr SAUNDERS: There is no reflection on the chair, Deputy Speaker. What I am talking about—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Maryborough, I made a ruling. I think that is now a reflection on the chair and you are warned under the standing orders.

Mr SAUNDERS: When it comes to trading hours, what is important for small businesses throughout Queensland is the employment rate. When the unemployment rate is low, more people shop at smaller businesses. That is their economic base. When there is high unemployment, people tend to shop at the bigger chains because they think it is cheaper.

As a government we have been working with small business operators throughout this state. We saw the great response from this government during the pandemic. In the Treasurer's ministerial statement today we heard about sales in our business community being up. That is what governments do. The committee report outlines extending the moratorium for another 12 months for small businesses to get used to the changes and for the QIRC to make sure that after that 12 months small businesses are ready for the changes that will happen.

Small businesses do play a major part in our community. I know that because I was in small business for many, many years. I know the part they play when they donate to sporting organisations. We see that in the community. No-one knows better than I do the part that small businesses play in the community. I have been through two floods in my community this year. We saw the devastating effect that had on small businesses in my community. That is why it is important that we back small businesses in our community. That is why we keep them alive. That is something that this government has done since we were elected in 2015. We have worked with small businesses.

I was on the original committee that looked at trading hours and we changed them. The other thing we have to remember as legislators is that people's shopping habits are changing, so we have to amend trading hours to work in with what the consumers want and how they spend their time shopping.

Small businesses are an integral part in our community. I would like to give a big shout-out to the small businesses in my community who weathered the two floods. The small business minister came up and we talked about support from the government and also about the committee hearing. The minister spoke to a lot of small businesses about the Trading (Allowable Hours) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. We went thought that.

I have been talking to small businesses in my community about this bill and how there will not be any changes for 12 months. I think this is a good bill. It has condensed it down. Once again the committee system is working well in this parliament. The minister has accepted the nine recommendations from the committee. That is what a good government does. That is what a government does that is committed to small business in our state.

I would also like to thank the minister for the changes to P&Cs. We know that P&Cs have struggled to get numbers to their meetings because of outbreaks of COVID and school lockdowns. I thank the minister very much because that issue has been brought to my attention in my electorate. I thank you for listening to the people in my community. That is what a good Labor government does. I commend the bill to the House.