




Speech By
Bruce Saunders

MEMBER FOR MARYBOROUGH

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MOTION

Jobs, Skills and Training

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (12.21 pm): If there is one thing I have learned in life it is that leopards do not change their spots. Listening to those opposite it is clear that they have not changed their spots. They were not for small business in the Newman era. They brought this state to its knees. The state was begging. That is why the people voted them out in spades and we came back to power.

In five years TMR has provided 215 traineeships and apprenticeships across the state. Those opposite do not want the Cross River Rail infrastructure program, but they will not come to Maryborough and tell my workers they will not build trains there. Those opposite are not interested in jobs or skills or keeping regional Queensland alive. The project has generated 342 apprentices, with 450 over the life of the project. Recently in my electorate of Maryborough the Premier and the transport minister announced a \$7.1 billion injection in rail infrastructure in this state. We do not cut; we are investing in this state, unlike those opposite.

Those opposite talk about TAFE. My TAFE was closed because of them. Earlier the member for Jordan was talking about people. When I was elected we had real estate agents walking around TAFE and they did not care about the students. Skilling Queenslanders for Work is one of the greatest programs ever invested in by a government in this country. Deloitte reported that every dollar spent returned \$8 to \$10. Those opposite were begged not to cut it when they came to power. The first thing they did was not only take out the axe, they pulled out the chainsaw. They cut it right down to the stumps. There was no growth left in it. It took a Palaszczuk Labor government to restore it.

In their 2017 budget and during the 2020 election campaign those opposite did not talk about training. They did not talk about skills and jobs for regional Queensland. I say often in the chamber that one of the saddest things I have ever seen in my life was their candidate for Maryborough on the Thursday night before the election when he found out that there was no money for trains or training. During the campaign he had been spruiking how good they were.

Those opposite have learned nothing. They do not care. All they are worried about is putting public money in private pockets. They are worried about their mates. They are not worried about making sure that people have skills and jobs or whether regional Queensland stays alive. The public knows that leopards do not change their spots.