



Speech By
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MEMBER FOR BANCROFT

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT

Workforce Strategy

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (2.27 pm): I rise to talk about the Queensland Workforce Strategy that has been released this week by the Labor government. I love this strategy and I look forward to speaking to our local businesses and schools about what this offers. One of the things I will talk about is what this plan is about. It is an overarching plan across the whole of government that will help deliver a range of solutions to help skill up the Queensland workforce. I will be outlining that there are \$70 million of new initiatives in this strategy which will help guide that \$1.2 billion we are spending this year to upgrade skills and make people ready for work. I will explain what this strategy aims to do—that is, to connect local businesses to local schools and governments to get that skilled workforce. I will explain that we will build a better workforce that will attract and retain skilled workers.

One of the things I would like to do is go out to local businesses to talk about the advantages of this strategy. I will talk to businesses such as Kennedy's Classic Aged Timbers in Narangba. I have spoken to Michael for many years about his issues with getting staff. He will take on anyone, but he needs people to work without a level of impairment on that heavy machinery he has. I am sure there will be advantages for him in this.

I will also talk to Patrick at Quality Plastic Products who have set up a new factory at Narangba, providing a range of innovative new products to the nursery industry. They really need skilled workers, especially toolmakers to make the dyes on their plastic-injected mould machines. I will also talk to Ian Buchanan at IB Town Planning. There is a huge demand for town planners in our area, but they really need to have the skills and qualifications before they start work. I will be talking to them specifically about the programs in this strategy. I make mention specifically of the Workforce Connect Fund. That will increase investment in local projects, coming through local communities and local businesses to address the local shortages. I will talk to them about the Gateway to Industry Schools Program where we work with local schools on those pathways to work, and a shout-out to Deception Bay High School and North Lakes State College in my area that are really good RTOs and are pushing kids into a variety of professions. I will talk about the pre-apprenticeship program to make sure people are ready to make that leap into apprenticeships and to reduce the number of apprenticeship drop-outs. I look forward to chatting to everyone about this strategy.