




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

Record of Proceedings, 12 May 2022

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

International Nurses Day; Racing Industry

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (10.25 am): I acknowledge the nurses in the gallery and wish everyone a very happy International Nurses Day. I join with the Premier and others in giving a special shout-out to all nurses. It was great to attend the morning tea and to hear of the great work they do day in, day out. I especially thank the nurses who are working in our state schools every day, including those working as part of our GPs in Schools program. You all do a fantastic job—welcome to parliament!

The Palaszczuk government recognises the important economic contribution of Queensland's racing industry. The new independent *Size and scope of the Queensland racing industry* report, produced by IER, demonstrates just how valuable that contribution is. Since the election of the Palaszczuk government in 2015, the economic contribution of Queensland's racing industry has soared 60 per cent to a record \$1.9 billion—a truly great outcome. We are seeing these dramatic increases across all three codes. Thoroughbred racing has risen from \$959 million to \$1.43 billion—an increase of 49 per cent. Harness racing has risen from \$142 million to \$184 million—an increase of 30 per cent. Finally, greyhound racing has risen from \$113 million to a whopping \$245 million—an increase of 116 per cent.

We know that racing is the lifeblood of many rural and remote communities. These racing events are often the largest or second largest events in town. They support thousands of local jobs—14,000 in the last financial year alone. I am proud to report that nearly half of our record \$1.9 billion economic contribution directly benefits regional economies in Queensland. Labor is still supporting the National Party in this state! That support includes \$145 million for the Toowoomba, Darling Downs and Maranoa region, where the industry is supporting 1,145 jobs; \$41.2 million for the Wide Bay-Burnett, supporting 332 jobs; and \$26.4 million for Mackay-Isaac-Whitsunday, supporting 216 jobs. With close to 30 race meetings held across the state every single week, with total annual attendance of more than 675,000, it is clear that racing is thriving in Queensland. Thanks to this government, 35 per cent of revenue from the state's point-of-consumption tax goes directly back into racing. I probably have to thank the member for Mermaid Beach for his contribution to that as well. I know that he is a very keen punter!

This report shows that the industry has performed incredibly well, despite the challenges of the pandemic. Supporting this industry is a critical part of the state's COVID-19 economic recovery plan. What better way to support this important industry than by attending one of the many events coming up during Stradbroke Season and the TAB Queensland Racing Carnival, which is now off and running. Staged over 10 action-packed weekends—

Mr Stevens interjected.

Ms GRACE: I will be there with you, member for Mermaid Beach—and with more than \$21 million in prize money on offer, including eight Group 1 features, the electrifying TAB Queensland Racing Carnival is the place to race this winter. I wish good luck to all those involved over the coming weeks. The Premier and I look forward to seeing you trackside during Stradbroke Season.