




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

Record of Proceedings, 24 May 2022

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Federal Labor Government, Workers

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.48 am): I would like to join the Premier and others in congratulating our new Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese, and the great federal Labor team. I look forward to working with the new Labor government to deliver for Queenslanders. I am pleased to hear work has begun on the employment summit, which will include addressing casualisation and insecure work.

Every single worker deserves governments at all levels that support and protect them, especially from high cost-of-living increases. I am pleased to say that Queenslanders have had this at a state level since 2015. I am proud of the nation-leading industrial relations reforms we have delivered. We have taken decisive action for Queensland workers where the Morrison federal government failed to do so. In 2017 we legislated Australia's first paid family and domestic violence leave. Finally action will be taken at a federal level to make this important entitlement a national employment standard.

When it comes to tackling worker exploitation we have led the nation on a number of fronts. In 2018 we established Australia's first labour hire licensing scheme. Our scheme has gone from strength to strength. Currently, nearly 3,700 labour hire providers are licensed to operate in Queensland. Labour hire and worker exploitation are national problems, and Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and his government understand this. I look forward to working with them to establish harmonised laws that reflect the high standards of Queensland's strong scheme. When it comes to worker exploitation, the scourge of wage theft is at the top of the list. That is why we acted and became the first state in Australia with operational wage theft laws. Finally action will be taken to tackle criminalising wage theft from a national perspective—a 2019 election commitment that was never delivered by the Morrison government.

The Palaszczuk government also has a strong record on advocating for fair wages and conditions for low-paid workers in the federal IR system. That is why we are supporting a minimum wage increase that keeps up with the cost of living and increases to wages in the aged-care sector. I am pleased to say that we now have a federal Labor government that will support low-paid workers who have experienced stagnating wages for too long. The Palaszczuk government has, and always will, stand up for Queensland workers. I look forward to working with the federal Labor Albanese government, which will finally do the same and help the rest of Australia benefit from our nation-leading work. Australian workers deserve no less.