



Speech By
Kim Richards

MEMBER FOR REDLANDS

Record of Proceedings, 1 September 2022

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (3.01 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the Education, Employment and Training Committee Report No. 15, 57th Parliament, *Inquiry into the operation of the Trading (Allowable Hours) Act 1990*, tabled on 31 January 2022.

I am really excited to be talking about trading hours again this sitting week. It was great to see how quickly our government moved on the findings of the inquiry in delivering legislation to ensure that we continue to support our retail sector. This report was a summary of the Education, Employment and Training Committee's inquiry into the operation of the Trading (Allowable Hours) Act 1990. The inquiry was referred from the Legislative Assembly on 14 September 2021. The committee was provided with the terms of reference and our task was to inquire into and report on the operation of the act, in particular the impact of amendments made by the Trading (Allowable Hours) Amendment Act 2017.

During the inquiry process we travelled the state. The committee heard from key stakeholders representing retailers, retail workers, local governments, chambers of commerce, tourism groups and small business owners. As in the previous review done by John Mickel—and I said this last week when we were debating the legislation—there were quite divergent views on retail trading hours arrangements, but on the whole it was very evident that the review done by Professor John Mickel and the Trading Hours Review Reference Group really unscrambled an egg, with over 99 different sets of trading hours orders refined down. We took the opportunity to enhance that just a little bit more and create a really solid and stable set of consistent trading hours across Queensland. The recommendation was to ensure that we could never scramble that egg again in multiple trading hours orders.

I thank all of the stakeholders who participated in the public hearings that we conducted in Cairns, Mossman, Townsville and Brisbane—we met with a whole range of stakeholders—and at those regional hearings a lot of people had come from quite a distance to participate, so I thank them for that. This is also a really good opportunity to again thank our retail workers who did an amazing job and continue to do an amazing job throughout the COVID pandemic. They really did keep the food on the table and the toilet paper in our toilets. These businesses and their hardworking employees make a significant contribution to our Queensland economy. I was really pleased that within the nine recommendations included in the inquiry report, all of which were subsequently adopted in the legislation passed last week, we sought to enhance protection for workers in terms of being asked to work extended hours. On the whole, all nine recommendations were clearly accepted by government and have already been implemented. I am not sure how the opposition will go in the balance of this debate, but I remind it that the statement of reservation provided within both the inquiry report and within the trading hours legislation debated last week was more a statement of support of those recommendations and what the Palaszczuk government has done in delivering a really solid set of trading hours that will ensure that our retailers will continue to flourish into the future.

On behalf of the committee, I again thank all of the individuals, businesses and organisations that made written submissions or otherwise contributed to our understanding of the issues in this inquiry. As I said, the views were extraordinarily divergent. I think we have the balance right in terms of providing that opportunity for navigation between those categories into the future using the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission as the independent arbiter in making those decisions to ensure that it is a robust and rigorous process in terms of any manoeuvring within those categories and with regard to those special events. I thank the Office of Industrial Relations and the Department of Education for their support throughout the inquiry and during debate of the legislation.