




Speech By
Hon. Leanne Linard

MEMBER FOR NUDGEES

Record of Proceedings, 18 August 2022

**TRADING (ALLOWABLE HOURS) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT
BILL**

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (11.38 am): I rise to speak in support of the Trading (Allowable Hours) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. Small retail businesses are the backbone of the Queensland economy. As the committee report outlined, in 2020 Queensland's retail industry generated more than \$73 billion and employed almost 270,000 people, making it the second largest employer in the state behind health care.

We know that many retailers have struggled during the last 2½ years since COVID. When we look back on that time it was not only our frontline health workers—and obviously we want to sing out to them and also our police, who did such an amazing job—but those retail businesses and retail workers who were some of the hardest hit during the pandemic. As we all know, they are more likely to be young, to be under casual contracts and were often the first to lose their jobs across different industries. However, they were also the very people that we really depended on to make sure the shelves were stacked and we had food in our homes. I acknowledge and give my sincere thanks to those in my electorate of Nudgee who did a great job in times of significant stress.

We have seen that our retail sector is resilient and strong. Trade turnover has increased by nearly 12 per cent since June 2021, surpassing its pre-COVID level. Not only has the pandemic significantly impacted small and retail businesses and business generally; the floods further exacerbated pain in our small business sector. Nowhere was this more keenly felt than in my own electorate of Nudgee, with the inundation and recently announced closure of Toombul Shopping Centre. If I pause for a moment in respect of Toombul, there are so many people who have a story of Toombul. It was not just a shopping centre and it was not just retailers; these were often northside locals who owned these small businesses—and let's not even stop to think about how many people lost their jobs in those local businesses. Many of us had a story, and so many members in this chamber from very different areas across the state have shared those stories with me. It was where I started my first job at the Toombul McDonald's as a 14-year-old in grade 9, where I learned to work hard. 'Time to lean? It's time to clean' and 'You're on; you're it'—these policies are as relevant at 41 as they are at 14.

I want to acknowledge the businesses that have been reaching out and talking to me about that devastation. I will mention just a few: Function Well, Natasha and Darren Bain; John from Priceline; Antica Home; ProfessionNAIL; delightful Jim from Hairhouse Warehouse; McDonald's Toombul and Nick, the franchise owner; Toombul Barber; Home & Her—these are all businesses that have ongoing concerns and are talking to Mirvac. They have my ongoing support as they seek to re-establish, and those conversations are ongoing. I give my heartfelt callout to them.

Mr Hinchliffe: Great work of the local member.

Ms LINARD: Thank you. I take the interjection from my colleague the member for Sandgate, whose community was similarly affected as they often visited this centre. It was a place of safety for many as well as for ongoing trade.

In respect of the bill, it was our government who in 2017 amended the trading hours act. This landmark reform modernised our previously complex trading hours laws. It helped simplify the process of running a business. Through extensive consultation with industry and stakeholders, the number of trading hours zones across Queensland was reduced from 99 to 12. I acknowledge all of the committee members who, under the excellent leadership of the member for Redlands, did a great job. I thank all of the stakeholders who came forward. The committee received evidence and feedback that the moratoriums and amendments to the act made in 2017 have provided consistent and stable trading arrangements for the retail sector as a whole as well as for individual businesses, workers and consumers. While the act is operating well to regulate trading hours arrangements, the committee identified some areas where it believes that provisions can be improved. They made nine recommendations in this regard and I acknowledge that the government accepted all of those recommendations.

The retail businesses in my electorate of Nudgee fall under a type 2 trading area. Under the type 2 classification the opening hours will remain 7 am to 9 pm, Monday to Saturday and 9 am to 6 pm on Sundays and public holidays. That provides ongoing confidence and certainty. Confidence and certainty for the retail and small business sector is crucial, and that is what this bill delivers. It is a demonstration of how our government delivers practical reforms in the interests of businesses, workers and communities. That process requires ongoing listening and consulting. It is something we have always done and something we will continue to do. Ongoing engagement with local business owners is the role of any local member worth their salt. It is something that I value highly in my own community. Each year I hold a significant small business breakfast. It grows every year, which I think is a representation of the fact that business wants to engage. They want to be at the table and they really appreciate the opportunity when you show your willingness.

Recently it was wonderful to visit Wavell Heights Gourmet Meats in my own community. They have just extended and had an opening. As a local member, when you get an email and a shout-out saying, 'Leanne, we know that you support our local community. We would like you to attend our open day,' it is always a privilege to be part of a business's growth, when you see them doing well, particularly after such a difficult time. It was lovely to drop out there. They of course fed me well—as these beautiful businesses do.

I have covered the business The Closet with Louisa Forrester in my social media. They are doing innovative things on our community. They reached out and said, 'Would you come and look at what we are doing and see if it is of interest?' Now they have become better known through amplifying what they are providing. It is lovely that a number of members have visited them as well.

Zillmere opened a new laundromat. I know that some might think that is a small thing, but it is not a small thing to have another business there. I do a lot of these visits together with my colleague the member for Sandgate. That laundromat is leaning into the community, to support them in a number of different initiatives. I give them a shout-out, too. I make mention that I have started doing small business awards.

Ms Pugh: It is a great idea!

Ms LINARD: Thank you. I take that interjection from my colleague, who knows that that great idea came from the outstanding campaigns that the member for Mount Ommaney and the member for Bulimba do every year. We started that in my electorate of Nudgee because we wanted those businesses to know that the community supports and loves them and that the community will continue to support them during difficult times. There were tens of thousands of votes and lots of engagement on social media posts when we were giving them shout-outs about what they do. It was an extraordinary representation that communities feel that they own these local businesses and that they are part of the stories of local businesses. Very often these local business owners are local families. I will do that again this year, and I am sure it will be even bigger than last year.

In the time I have left I mention P&Cs. I am sure every parent in this chamber will agree that our lives are busy—the juggle is complex. I note in the committee report the advice from P&Cs Qld that the use of video technology to conduct meetings during COVID was welcomed. I hope it will lead to the participation of more parents in P&C meetings. It will certainly be welcomed by P&Cs in my electorate. I love going to P&C meetings. I think sometimes they think I am mad, but I enjoy them. I like hearing about the tuckshop reports, the swim club reports and the uniform reports—

Mr McDonald: What is the best food they serve?

Ms LINARD: I will take that interjection and give you a shout-out for your community. I love attending those meetings because, of course, we engage with our principals—our principals and teachers do an amazing job—but when you go to a P&C you get to see the culture and the heart of a

school, because that is where the mums and the dads are. The principal is at the table, but as a local member you also get to say, 'I can help with that' and 'You might not know I could help with that but also our federal colleague could help with that', or 'direct that to the council'.

I do spend quite a lot of time with my P&Cs. I was with Northgate State School P&C last week and Earnshaw State College the week before. It is always nicer to be in the room. I acknowledge that we are all loving being back in a room together. I think it is important to acknowledge that some parents cannot be in the room and they should be empowered to be a part of those meetings. There is an amazing outreach of volunteering from busy parents who are really leaning in and investing in local schools. I give a shout-out to every active parent in these P&Cs who does it for these beautiful young people in our schools and wants to see them succeed. On that note, I commend the bill to the House.