




Speech By
Hon. Scott Stewart

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

Record of Proceedings, 1 September 2022

MOTION

Jobs, Skills and Training

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (12.52 pm): As a government we have a strong track record of supporting jobs throughout Queensland, including in the regions and resources sector. This has always been a priority for us as a government because we know that good jobs mean good opportunities for more people.

The resources sector is one of Queensland's major employers, supporting more than 77,000 jobs, and a key part of our economic recovery from COVID-19. I note that, despite some people talking down the resources industry and the opportunities on offer, a shortage of workers is still an issue for the sector. That is why the Palaszczuk government's *Good people good jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022-2032* is so important.

In fact, building a resilient and diverse workforce is also a key focus area of our Queensland Resource Industry Development Plan. Attracting and retaining people with the right skills is essential. That is where education and training is so important. Being a former teacher and principal, education is something I am very passionate about. The member for Surfers Paradise alluded to people not valuing anything given to them for free. Let me tell members about Gough Whitlam giving me my teaching degree for free. I absolutely valued it and still value it today.

In my hometown of Townsville I have seen firsthand the investment in both Pimlico and Bohle TAFE campuses. This includes partnerships with businesses like Ark Energy that has signed an MOU with TAFE Queensland to help train our young people to work in the hydrogen industry. Working competitively is a key part of making sure we have the right, trained workforce in place. The Premier is in Canberra today working with the federal Albanese Labor government at the national Jobs and Skills Summit.

Our investment and commitment to training and education is in stark contrast to that of the LNP which saw no value in education and training and still does not. They refuse to even talk about it. In fact, the Leader of the Opposition did not even mention training and skills in his budget reply speech. The LNP have never been supportive of TAFE or the education system. I know the member for Mundingburra will remember this. The LNP closed Stuart State School in Townsville. This was at the same time as tearing apart our TAFE system, cutting funding by almost \$170 million and cutting more than 2,000 TAFE jobs. We have a proud track record of creating jobs and investing in our TAFEs. That is because the Palaszczuk government has the plan to skill more Queenslanders for good, secure jobs.