




Speech By
Brittany Lauga

MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

International Women's Day; Women in Manufacturing

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (2.41 pm): Last week we celebrated the achievements of women and girls on International Women's Day and Queensland Women's Week. I wish all of the women in this place a very happy International Women's Day and thank them for their sisterly solidarity as women who are standing up for a brighter future for everyone in our state. It is not easy being a woman in politics, but together we are making a difference in our communities for all Queenslanders and making it easier for the women and girls who will come after us in here.

It was a privilege to attend the Rockhampton Women's Shed inaugural International Women's Day event. It was a really lovely way to kick off Queensland Women's Week. The positive speeches and discussions about prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence, pay equality, health, community safety, mental wellbeing and education all left me feeling grateful to have such generous, kind-hearted women in our community who want to make a difference. Thank you to fellow panellists Tracey Bob, Christine Brown, Jenny Corn and Ashleigh Saunders, who all brought together their own stories, experiences and knowledge. Thank you to emcee Beck Agius and the entire Women's Shed committee and membership for the invitation to be part of the morning. The Rockhampton Women's Shed is smashing glass ceilings by offering women and girls the opportunity to develop new skills, new friendships and opportunities with car and yard maintenance workshops, trying new sports like shooting and bowls, and self-defence lessons. I look forward to seeing this great new cooperative go from strength to strength.

During the week, I was also very proud that the Palaszczuk Labor government officially launched the Women in Manufacturing Strategy. The aim of the new strategy is to attract and retain women in the industry, with particular focus on increasing participation in traditionally male dominated roles. Four priority areas have been identified to help women get good manufacturing jobs in Queensland including (1) supporting diversity, equity and inclusion in the manufacturing industry; (2) building on our existing capabilities and skills to further women's leadership and development; (3) boosting women's participation in vocational education and training, building the STEM pipeline and promoting advanced manufacturing capabilities throughout secondary and tertiary studies; and (4) celebrating and showcasing the women in Queensland's manufacturing industry.

Manufacturing has consistently contributed more than \$20 billion per annum to the state's economy over the past decade, and that number continues to grow. Increasing women in manufacturing by promoting an inclusive culture makes employees feel that they belong and contributes to a more diverse, robust industry. An advanced manufacturing sector that is innovative, diverse and agile presents many opportunities for women including exciting new career pathways. We know that having a bigger workforce of people with a broad range of lived experiences will help Queensland cement its reputation as a world-leading manufacturing powerhouse. I visited a large number of Central Queensland manufacturers where women are working in a diverse range of roles—from the shop floor

to CEO—and there is no doubt that the diverse working culture leads to better outcomes. I give a special shout-out to Adnought Sheet Metals' very talented tradeswoman Megan Byrne. I look forward to seeing her soon to talk more about the Women in Manufacturing Strategy.

The Palaszczuk government remains focused on creating a better, fairer and safer Queensland for women and girls. It was great to see that the federal LNP member for Capricornia has finally worked out that supporting women and girls in our community is an important part of her job as an elected representative. Only a few years ago the member for Capricornia stood by then prime minister Tony Abbott—he was minister for women at the time—when he cut the young mums program at Girls Time Out, a local women's health and support service in Rockhampton. This is a program that provides support to young mums as they navigate parenthood. It supported some of the most vulnerable women and children in our community but, in a cruel blow, Tony Abbott, Michelle Landry and the LNP cut the funding. I fought side by side with the young mums of Girls Time Out to stop their funding being cut, and we won. The Palaszczuk and Albanese Labor governments back Girls Time Out, which is why a few eyebrows were raised last week when Michelle Landry was spruiking the Albanese government's funding of Girls Time Out, the very program that she and Tony Abbott cut.

Ms Pease: An absolute disgrace.

Ms LAUGA: It is an absolute disgrace. I thank the women and girls at Girls Time Out for always supporting our community. The Palaszczuk and Albanese Labor governments support women and girls in Queensland. We know—unlike those opposite, Tony Abbott and Michelle Landry—that when women support women everyone wins.