



Speech By  
**Charis Mullen**


**MEMBER FOR JORDAN**

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## **MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

### **International Women's Day; Queensland Women's Week**

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (2.22 pm): Last week we celebrated International Women's Day and Queensland Women's Week. It is always a wonderful opportunity to showcase the amazing Queensland women we have in our state, particularly those leading the way in business and trade. As the assistant minister for Treasury I have been working with our Trade and Investment Queensland team on highlighting some of the individual companies that are exporting their products and services to the world whilst creating good jobs for hardworking Queenslanders.

Last week I set TIQ a challenge. As we celebrated Queensland Women's Week, I sought out Queensland companies that were founded or led by Queensland women and I was not left disappointed. In two days, we visited nine amazing companies in South-East Queensland alone. The legal technology platform company Lawcadia is expanding into the UK under the leadership of Sacha Kirk. I met with Theodora Le Souquet, who is the director of Canara Technology, a recognised leader in the emerging field of predictive biometrics. Morlife, one of Australia's leading health food supplement companies, led by Cheryl Stewart, recently signed a superfood export deal with Cosco Korea. The amazing Deann Thomson, who is the founder of Diego's Authentic Foods—Queensland's only Australian-owned manufacturer of corn and flour tortillas—is now exporting Mexican products to Asia and the Middle East. Alison Atia, the creator of the incredible skincare range Skin 02—loved by a number of Hollywood celebrities—has entered several competitive markets in Korea, India, the UK and Gulf countries. I also met with the inspiring Dr Cori Stewart from the Advanced Robotics for Manufacturing Hub in Northgate; Joanne Barber, chief operating officer of Future Feed; and Dr Chamindika Konara, general manager of Qlicksmart.

I simply do not have time to cover all of the amazing companies I was able to visit and the inspiring women who lead them, but what is very clear is that Queensland has and continues to be an outward looking, export oriented state. In 2022 Queensland's exports hit \$137.2 billion, the largest ever calendar year total, but we are not resting on our laurels and we know the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games will provide our state with one of the best opportunities in a lifetime to capitalise on significant international investment and greater export reach. That is why our government is investing an additional \$150 million over the next decade to deliver a new 10-year trade and investment strategy. This strategy will ensure Trade and Investment Queensland can continue to support our exporters to reach new markets and boost sales where they are already trading, as well as attract more overseas investment into Queensland, creating jobs and opportunities.

Why are these visits so important? Firstly, the truth is that every time the LNP talk down our state and our economy, they paint a negative narrative. When they do not offer any new ideas or plans for the future except to cut, sack and sell and when they attack our hardworking public servants, this impacts business confidence and creates a harmful impression of Queensland, both nationally and internationally. This is why I will continue to visit amazing companies across Queensland, particularly

in areas like the Gold Coast, Toowoomba and the Sunshine Coast, because businesses in LNP electorates deserve to know that the Palaszczuk government has their best interests at heart. A dynamic and stable economy, a pro-business environment and advanced infrastructure continue to offer the best climate to expand and grow jobs and prosperity across this great state.

Secondly, as a government we support women in our state, not by offering lip-service but real support. We want them to succeed in whatever industry or sector they choose to work in or pursue. This includes politics. The Leader of the Opposition has made it clear he is putting everything on the line to boost the diversity of his party room. He suggested he would be held accountable if party members failed to back what he was calling for. What is he calling for? He wants seven new women in his parliamentary team. Seven! Not eight, not 10, seven. That is it, people. The LNP state director has said people were banging down the door to run, but those seven women better get in quick before that door shuts.

An article in the *Australian* in January would suggest that the grassroots LNP members in the seat of Caloundra did not seem to get the Crisafulli everything-on-the-line memo. It speaks of preselection drama, massive disquiet on the gender push, a major test of Mr Crisafulli's leadership, and chaos if the Leader of the Opposition intervenes, with one LNP source indicating it is going to be a—I cannot say that, that is really unparliamentary. How will the Leader of the Opposition achieve his grand seven-woman plan? He refuses to say whether he personally supports female quotas, instead he offers these inspiring words to women everywhere: 'We are a grassroots party and how we get to where we need to get to I'll let the members debate.' Wow! Happy International Women's Day, LNP.