



Speech By  
**Hon. Di Farmer**


**MEMBER FOR BULIMBA**

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Record of Proceedings, 29 March 2023

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Training and Skills, Infrastructure**

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (9.59 am): The Queensland government is committed to publicly owned training infrastructure because we believe that, whoever you are or wherever you are in Queensland, you deserve access to high-quality vocational education. It is why we are investing \$100 million into the Equipping TAFE for our Future initiative, an initiative which identifies the workforce demands of the future and invests in infrastructure now to make sure we have the skilled workers to meet those demands. The program commits to new and/or upgraded facilities at 19 sites across 15 campuses, and already we are over halfway there. In fact, just about every month I seem to be opening a new facility or turning the first sod for an upgrade. I am loving it!

Next week I will be with the member for Hervey Bay opening the new nursing and allied health facility there, where demand for nurses is five times the national average. I know how excited the member is about that. This month I was with the Premier and other ministers at Bohle TAFE—and of course our very proud members for Townsville, Thuringowa and Mundingburra—turning the first sod on the new renewable energy training facility and advanced manufacturing hub. This was a first for TAFE Queensland and a critical piece in the Palaszczuk government's plan to support more training infrastructure for emerging industries.

This month I was also at Southbank TAFE showing the national skills ministers the new robotics centre there and our new cybersecurity training facility. Last month I opened stage 2 of the Rural Centre of Excellence in Toowoomba. Earlier this year the minister for agriculture opened the new aquaculture training facility at Bowen. At the end of last year I was with the members for Capalaba and Redlands, along with the federal Minister for Training, to open the new electrotechnology training facility at Alexandra Hills TAFE. Both of those members are such strong advocates for their local TAFEs. I have opened the cybersecurity training centre at Mooloolaba TAFE, the new plumbing tower at Ashmore TAFE, the new student learning centre at Cannonvale TAFE—and the list goes on. We are building opportunity all over the state.

Alongside this fantastic program, we are also committed to making sure that every Queenslanders has access to that training by building on our successful free TAFE and free apprenticeships for under-25s initiative which has seen 62,000 Queenslanders supported into free training in priority areas including construction. We have a record 24,000 apprentices training this year. This is critical when we are talking about the housing issues that have been discussed so much this week and in so many other key areas. This year we have partnered in a \$200 million investment with the federal government on our 'free TAFE for all' initiative. This has already seen 16,000 enrolments across priority courses, with some of the most popular being in: early childhood, individual support, accounting and bookkeeping, and IT.

Our government is committed to good jobs, better services and a great lifestyle. We want to provide every Queenslanders with the opportunity to get a job. We want a workforce with the skills to meet the needs of our burgeoning economy and to provide the services every Queenslanders deserves. Our investment in skills and training shows that we are intent on achieving this.