




Speech By
Hon. Di Farmer

MEMBER FOR BULIMBA

Record of Proceedings, 13 June 2023

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Small Business, Grants

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business, Minister for Training and Skills Development and Minister for Youth Justice) (10.06 am): The Palaszczuk government champions small business. They are the heart and soul of our communities. By supporting small business we are growing good jobs, a strong economy and an unbeatable lifestyle. Last month, we reached a milestone in our support for small businesses—\$35 million in grants supporting more than 5,800 Queensland businesses has been provided under the *Big plans for small business strategy 2021-23*. The three pillars are: Business Boost grants of up to \$15,000; Business Growth Fund grants of up to \$75,000; and our \$5,000 Business Basics grant. This will help small businesses grow and prosper and make it easy to do business in Queensland.

In last year's budget, funding for these three core small business grants was set in stone. The Business Boost Grants Program has helped 379 businesses to share in more than \$4.7 million so they can increase their productivity—businesses like the Vision Splendid Outbreak Film Festival in Winton, which received more than \$11,000 to create a new website that includes a ticketing platform and film directory with online streaming options.

In May, I announced \$5.8 million for 1,159 small businesses in the latest Business Basics round, taking the total grant funding allocated under this very popular grants program to almost \$27 million, which helped 5,379 businesses over the period. Hairdressers, tradies, personal trainers and accountants were among the latest recipients looking to build websites, develop marketing strategies and upskill staff in emerging industry trends to improve their business. It included Cairns Adventure Therapy in the electorate of Cairns, which will use its funding to access training and mentoring from two of Queensland's leading bush kindy providers and ultimately expand their bush kindy program.

A government member interjected.

Ms FARMER: I take that interjection. Our Business Growth Fund has supported 82 businesses with funding of over \$3.7 million. This means businesses like Weltrade Packaging in the electorate of Southport can buy specialised equipment to unlock growth potential. This company specialises in producing biodegradable and sustainable plastic packaging. They are using their grant to purchase an automated blowing and bagging machine to increase production.

We know that small business values what we do to help it because it tells us, like Brisbane business Hunter Model Management in the electorate of McConnel which received a grant in round 4. It said—

Thankyou so much ... this is going to do so much to propel my modelling agency forward. This will allow me to lean more into my business development and expand.

Imbil Family Day Care in Gympie said—

This will really help my business grow and become a very high quality of care and education for the children here and into the wider community.

We will continue to support small businesses to survive and thrive as we near the end of our three-year Big Plans for Small Business Strategy, which saw \$2.5 billion provided to small business through the COVID period. I am excited about the new small business strategy we are in the process of developing and for which we have already received outstanding input in record numbers in our survey of small businesses across the state through my Small Business Advisory Council and key small business stakeholders and others in terms of how small businesses can be part of the 2032 Olympics and other key government initiatives like the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan. These are all on the table. We will help small businesses around the state be their absolute best and we will drive our economy forward.