



Speech By  
**Hon. Di Farmer**


**MEMBER FOR BULIMBA**

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Record of Proceedings, 10 October 2023

**MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Liberal National Party, TAFE**

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business, Minister for Training and Skills Development and Minister for Youth Justice) (2.33 pm): All around the state there are school students who are making decisions about their future. In fact, some of them might be our own children. They must be so excited about what is going on in vocational education. Under our Fee-Free TAFE partnership with the federal government, 45,000 people have been able to get a free TAFE education. In fact, over the weekend the government announced that another \$300 million was going to go into Fee-Free TAFE. We are negotiating with them at the moment as to how many of those are going to go to Queensland. Already we have seen big enrolments in early childhood education, individual support and nursing—all occupations that are in high demand. It is not just about those students getting to choose things which will define their lives; these are important for our economy and for our future workforce.

If you are a parent of one of these students you would be worried about what will happen after the next election. You need to know that there are opportunities for your children. If one was to look at what the LNP has to offer, as it is putting itself up as an alternative government, one would not be clear on what it is offering. It is over 1,000 days since I have been asked in this chamber any question at all about vocational education. One would not think that the workforce was the No. 1 issue on the lips of every employer. One would not think that the future of young people was important for us to think about. Those opposite have no plan. It is a vacuum. The Leader of the Opposition was talking about how Queenslanders need to vote for them because they have the right priorities. If only anyone knew what those priorities are!

We have heard a lot about what Jann Stuckey said when talking about the new candidates those opposite had preselected. On the weekend Amanda Stoker was preselected. What is she going to speak about? There are no plans or policies for her to take to the electorate. Jann says that they present as whingeing, weary, policy-vacant, ageing, grumpy individuals. 'Where are their policies?' she asks. 'Not happy, Jann!' Jann has always been one to speak her mind. Jann has a point. I have always loved Jann.

After seeing the interview with the member for Mudgeeraba, I get why those opposite do not have a plan. They are hankering after the good old days. They are hankering after cutting, sacking and selling. They are aspiring to get in and knock off all of those public servants they hate so much. The member for Burnett has already told us what he thinks about nurses. We know what the member for Mudgeeraba thinks about nurses. Before they went to the last election they said that public servants had nothing to fear. Then, quick as a flash, they sacked 14,000 of them. We know what they did in TAFE. We know that the LNP hate TAFE. It is in their DNA.

If you are a parent of one of those students thinking about their future or if you are a mature-age person and you are thinking about how you might change your life, this is what will happen under the LNP because that is what the good old days were for the LNP. It is all the same old people from the Campbell Newman days. They are all hankering after what they got to do under Campbell Newman when they sacked 2,100 staff. They cut \$170 million in funding. They closed five campuses and they recommended cutting 36 more. In Far North Queensland they were going to cut the number of TAFE campuses in half. On the Gold Coast they were going to cut them in half. In the western corridor they were going to cut them by two thirds. In the Brisbane region they were going to cut them by a third. That is what happens when the LNP gets into government. They are not talking about a plan because they have a plan. They know exactly what they want to do: cut, sack and sell. It is leaking out, and Queenslanders can be very clear about what the future will be under an LNP government.