




Speech By
Hon. Lance McCallum

MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA

Record of Proceedings, 2 May 2024

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Small Business, Cost of Living

 **Hon. LR McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (10.24 am): We have listened to Queenslanders who have said that, despite our booming economy, they are feeling national cost-of-living pressures and they need more support. The new Miles government is taking action, with \$1,000 off every Queenslanders power bill. That also means more money in the pockets of Queenslanders to spend in our almost half a million small businesses.

I am advised that around 350,000 of those businesses are sole traders, family and home-based businesses, also feeling the pressure of increased household bills and national cost-of-living pressures, so they too will benefit from \$1,000 off their energy bill. For the around 200,000 small businesses with an electricity bill at work, we are extending our \$325 share of the highly successful \$650 small business electricity rebate in the new financial year. That brings the total support for small business electricity bills to \$975. We will continue to advocate on behalf of Queensland's small businesses to ensure the continued \$650 rebate with a federal co-contribution.

Queensland has the best cost-of-living relief for small business so they are able to grow, thrive and compete with the big end of town. This builds on our existing support for small and family businesses through our on-time payment policy that requires payment on time, every time. We are also providing further backing through a network of high-quality small business wellness coaches and expert financial counsellors. More than 3,000 clients have been provided free, confidential, one-on-one counselling for small business owners experiencing or facing financial hardship. These practical services are available because the Miles Labor government gets it and is backing small business in whatever way we can.

It is not solely about small business owners: more than one million Queenslanders work in small businesses. By keeping our energy assets in public hands and taking on big mining companies to deliver progressive coal royalties, we are able to take direct action to put more money back in the pockets of Queenslanders and the bank accounts of our small businesses. The LNP voted to sell our assets and want to hand back billions to multinational mining companies. They would simply cut our rebates.