




Speech By
Hon. Lance McCallum

MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA

Record of Proceedings, 22 May 2024

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

TAFE

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (9.54 am): TAFE has a proud history in our great state of training generations of Queenslanders for more than 140 years. Now with Labor's Big Build upon us, its vital role in ensuring aspiring Queenslanders can get into highly skilled jobs quicker will be even more important. That is why Labor is proudly supporting the backbone of our skilled workforce. Today I am proud to announce that as part of our landmark Queensland Skills Strategy, the new Miles Labor government will invest a further \$203 million in TAFE Queensland. This funding boost will mean an even stronger publicly owned accessible TAFE Queensland that is focused on the skills and training needs of all Queenslanders.

Over the course of our new strategy we will deliver up to 70,000 free TAFE places, easing cost-of-living pressures and opening doors to good jobs for all Queenslanders. This \$203 million uplift will: support a sustainable, responsive and vibrant TAFE at the heart of Queensland's strong training system; invest in new and upgraded TAFE facilities as part of the management, development, investment and transformation of our publicly owned TAFE assets; support TAFE to ensure training is available in specialised fields and priority industries and in our communities right across Queensland; and kickstart our delivery on the National Skills Agreement priorities, including TAFE Centres of Excellence and the TAFE leadership network. TAFE Queensland is more than an educational institution; it is a pillar of empowerment for Queenslanders right across our state.

Every dollar that is spent on public education is an investment in our future and it ensures education remains a right, not a privilege. Unfortunately, that is not a belief that is shared by those opposite. The LNP would rob our young people of the chance to pursue their career dreams and aspirations by jacking up course fees, closing campuses, sacking teachers and bringing free TAFE to a dead end.

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Southern Downs is warned under the standing orders.

Mr McCALLUM: An alternative government would gut TAFE like a fish, denying countless Queenslanders who simply want a fair chance at a better future. Only Labor will invest in publicly owned TAFE because only Labor will put people before profits.