



MEDIA STATEMENT



Brittany Lauga MP B Urb Dev (Urb&Reg Plan)(Hons), C.Dec

MEMBER FOR KEPPEL AND ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

4 February 2021

Lauga says 'Keep JobKeeper open

Job seekers and businesses in Central Queensland must stand up and urge the federal government to extend its JobKeeper scheme, the Member for Keppel and Assistant Education Minister Brittany Lauga said today.

“On behalf of those who lost their jobs during the pandemic, and those businesses struggling still, I call on the Federal Member Michelle Landry and her boss Prime Minister Scott Morrison to help struggling industries in CQ that are impacted by the ongoing closure of international borders

“As it stands right now, in a few weeks’ time Mr Morrison and Ms Landry will pull the plug on that life support – that is a terrifying prospect considering JobKeeper has supported thousands of workers across our region throughout this difficult time.

The JobKeeper program is slated to end on the 28th of March 2021, with no plans for further extension by the Morrison Government.

Ms Lauga said a lack of targeted support from the Federal Government would be a devastating outcome for the region.

“The point of JobKeeper is to support business through these unprecedented times with retaining staff so that when we do make it out of this crisis, we still have strong industries on the other side,

“The choice is simple – Mr Morrison can extend JobKeeper in Central Queensland for our local businesses so they can rebound on the other side of the pandemic, or he can pull the plug in March like he currently intends to and we are left to pick up the pieces.

She said this issue is above politics.

Delivering for you in Keppel

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“The Morrison Government must listen to our community, keep the plug in the wall and extend JobKeeper in this time of need to give us the best fighting chance to bounce back on the other side of the pandemic.”

Ms Lauga said before the international borders closed, Queensland welcomed around 2.7 million international tourists every year, injecting \$6 billion into our state’s economy each and every year.

“Central Queensland’s natural environment, beautiful beaches and rich history has always given it a competitive advantage in the global tourism market, and its local tourism industry has long been regarded as a central economic pillar of the region.

“Despite these advantages, the tourism industry here has been hit hard by the economic effects of the global COVID-19 crisis, with international travel bans cutting deep into local tourism patronage.”

“It’s no secret that the JobKeeper scheme is the life support machine that many local tourism operators are relying on.”

Ms Lauga said that extending JobKeeper was “critical” to keeping the region’s tourism industry alive.

ENDS

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