

*A strong voice for our future*

**BRITTANY LAUGA MP**

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**MEMBER FOR KEPPEL  
AND ASSISTANT MINISTER  
FOR EDUCATION**



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Lauga slams Landry over ‘wage theft’

Michelle Landry should hang her head in shame for turning her back on employees being ripped off through ‘wage theft’ in the workplace.

The Member for Keppel and Assistant Education Minister Brittany Lauga said one of the most common forms of wage theft is employers not paying superannuation for workers.

“Recently the LNP Government, with support from people like the Member for Capricornia Michelle Landry and Senator Matthew Canavan, established an amnesty for employers who have broken the law and failed to pay these basic entitlements.

“This means that if you are a worker and you steal from your employer you will have the book thrown at you.

“But, under Michelle Landry and her government, you can be an employer who steals from an employee, by not paying enough or any super, and you get away with it ... so long as you say ‘sorry’.”

“It would be a joke if it wasn’t so serious.” Ms Lauga said in contrast, new laws were passed in Queensland Parliament on 9 September 2020 to capture deliberate, intentional behaviour leading to under, or non-payment, of entitlements as a criminal offence.

This could include where deliberate wage theft occurs through:

- unpaid hours or underpaid hours

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- unpaid penalty rates
- unreasonable deductions
- unpaid superannuation
- withholding entitlements
- underpayment through intentionally misclassifying a worker including wrong award, wrong classification, or by 'sham contracting' and the misuse of Australian Business Numbers (ABN)
- authorised deductions that have not been applied as agreed.

She said the new laws also provide a simple, quick and low-cost process for wage recovery claims

These legal changes respond to the findings and recommendations of a 2018 Queensland Parliamentary Committee inquiry into wage theft in Queensland.

“Alarmingly the Committee found that wage theft is widespread, affecting around 437,000 (approximately one in five) Queensland workers each year and costing more than \$1 billion every year in unpaid or underpaid wages,” said Ms Lauga.

More on wage theft is available at [www.oir.qld.gov.au/industrial-relations/wage-theft](http://www.oir.qld.gov.au/industrial-relations/wage-theft)

**ENDS**

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