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MEMBER: Ms LAUGA

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (12.37 pm): I rise this afternoon to speak on the cognate debate for the Appropriation Bill 2020 and the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2020. In reflecting on the contribution of the member for Clayfield—a former treasurer, and a failed treasurer at that, and Campbell Newman's right-hand man—

**Ms Pease:** Failed leader. Don't forget that.

**Ms LAUGA:** Failed leader as well; there is a long list there. He was Campbell Newman's right-hand man. In his 15-minute contribution in this place, he completely ignored the fact that we are experiencing a global pandemic where hundreds of thousands of people have died—

**Mr Nicholls** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Weir): Member for Clayfield, you have had your turn. It is the member for Keppel who now has the call.

**Ms LAUGA:** Hundreds of thousands of people have died, millions of people have been infected and economies around the world are in turmoil, but I do not think the former treasurer and former leader of the LNP even mentioned the words 'COVID' or 'pandemic' in his entire 15-minute contribution.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms Grace:** It's like it's not happening.

**Ms LAUGA:** That is right. I take that interjection.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Keppel, I encourage you to address your comments through the chair instead of across the chamber. To those on my left, I say that I held order in the House during the last contribution and I ask that it happen again.

020 **Ms LAUGA:** In that entire contribution of the member for Clayfield there was not one mention of the pandemic, not one mention of COVID-19, not one mention of—

**Mr NICHOLLS:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member is misleading the House—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Weir): Member for Clayfield, you have a point of order?

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I do have a point of order. The member is misleading the House. I quite clearly said it in the last part of my contribution. I take offence. I ask the member to withdraw.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Keppel—

**Ms LAUGA:** I withdraw. Even if it was only mentioned once in the entire 15-minute contribution—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** When you withdraw you do not then start with 'but'. You withdraw unreservedly. Do you withdraw?

**Ms LAUGA:** I withdraw. It is almost like those opposite are completely ignoring the fact that there is a global pandemic happening at the moment. It reminds me of that RACQ ad with the woman in the backyard with the sheet on a clothesline. She asked, 'What charter boat?' It is like those opposite are running around saying, 'What pandemic? What pandemic is going on? What economic turmoil is being caused right now?' It is completely crazy. Those opposite want to whinge and they want to whine. They are so negative. They are talking down the Queensland economy.

**Mr Watts** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Toowoomba North, you have made your contribution.

**Ms LAUGA:** Those opposite need to get on board because we are getting Queensland back on track. We are getting Queenslanders back to work. Queensland is doing so well. Our forecast economic rebound is almost twice as strong as the Australian average, but we do not hear those opposite talking about that.

**Ms Pease:** They don't want to know about that.

**Ms LAUGA:** They do not want to know about that. Global economies are doing it tough and Queensland is not immune. As a result of the hard work by Queenslanders, we are the best performing state in response to the global pandemic in Australia. Central Queensland, the patch that I represent in this place, has been so strong this year. Not only have we all banded together to contain the spread of COVID-19 in Central Queensland, but I have also been witnessing local people helping each other, supporting the vulnerable and immune suppressed in our community and doing our best to support local businesses by buying locally.

Central Queenslanders are tough. Whether it be floods, cyclones, bushfires or global pandemics, we know how to plan for, respond to and recover from disasters. I take this opportunity to thank the Central Queensland Health and Hospital Service, including the CEO, Steve Williamson; the chairman of the board, Paul Bell; and members of the executive and board. Importantly, I also thank the nurses, assistant nurses, doctors, surgeons, allied health professionals, community and public health officers including the unsung heroes, our contact tracers, the cleaners, the wardies, pathology staff, cooks, laundry staff and everyone who has rolled up their sleeves and worked so hard together to contain the spread of this virus in our community. When the case was diagnosed at the North Rockhampton Nursing Centre it became the epicentre of COVID-19 in Queensland. Because of the brilliant work done by all the staff there, the staff at the Rocky hospital, the Mater and the Hillcrest; and the QAS, everyone was able to keep our most vulnerable elderly residents safe.

We know that the best way to shield our economy right now is to contain the spread of COVID-19 and to keep Queenslanders as safe and as healthy as possible. It is only because of this strong response that Queensland can put the pedal to the metal and get our economy back on track. That is why the Premier and this government have been so strong in ensuring that Queenslanders have been kept as safe as possible. We know that things are tough for Queenslanders right now right across the state. It is only the Premier, Anastacia Palaszczuk, and Labor that have a plan for economic recovery that will not hurt Queenslanders by cutting services, sacking workers and selling assets.

I note that *Unite & Recover: Queensland's economic recovery plan* is a great document that really outlines all of the ways in which the Queensland government is going to work together with Queenslanders to bounce back from this global pandemic. I love page 29 in particular which outlines how Dobinsons Spring & Suspension, a local North Rockhampton manufacturer, has been awarded over \$580,000 through a Made in Queensland round 2 grant towards a \$1.2 million project to introduce state-of-the-art cold coiling processing capabilities. The director, Mr Glen Dobinson, said the grant has helped the company get through these trying times and become more cost-effective while expanding their product range. They were able to put on three new full-time workers and they expect to create a total of 12 new jobs in the region over the next five years. That is a perfect example of how we are supporting manufacturers in Queensland to bounce back from this global pandemic, create jobs and support our local economy.

The Premier, Anastacia Palaszczuk, and Queensland Labor's plan for economic recovery is simple: supporting, protecting and creating jobs is our No. 1 priority. We will do that by investing in building and construction projects across our state, particularly in our regions. Take roads, for example. More than 1,500 jobs will be supported by a \$1.4 billion road-building boom in Central Queensland being delivered by the Palaszczuk government. I speak of projects like the Rockhampton ring-road, the northern access upgrade and the Yeppoon and Rockhampton roads upgrade which are all part of that package. Importantly, there is also the \$14.3 million 42-bed detox and rehab centre, which is important for supporting people with drug and alcohol problems to get the treatment they need.

We are helping small businesses in Queensland; we are giving them the support they need to recover quicker and stronger. I have visited dozens of small businesses in my electorate recently who have taken advantage of the Palaszczuk government's Small Business Adaptation Grant. Take Jacinta Perry at Boost Juice Rockhampton, who was awarded the grant to pay some rent. In the case of Daryl and Nat at Wilson's Farm Fresh Fruit & Veg, a digital business upgrade has been installed at that their farm at Nankin as well as an upgrade to their ordering system. Loretta Simpson at Lyn-Jelle Crafts in Emu Park has used the grant to pay their electricity bill. Also through this recovery plan we will buy more goods and materials locally and ensure that Queensland businesses, from small to large, play an even bigger role in our economic recovery.

By investing in Queensland's manufacturing industry we can also ensure that Queenslanders use and buy more goods and services made right here in Queensland. Queensland's manufacturing industry employs over 165,000 people and it is incredibly important to the Central Queensland region. The manufacturing industry employs about seven per cent of the state's workforce and contributes about \$20 billion per annum to the state's economy.

The Palaszczuk Labor government has put Queensland on the road to recovery by making strong health decisions on the border and starting to deliver Queensland's economic recovery plan. The member for Nanango, Deb Frecklington, and the LNP cannot be trusted with our recovery. I commend the bills to the House.