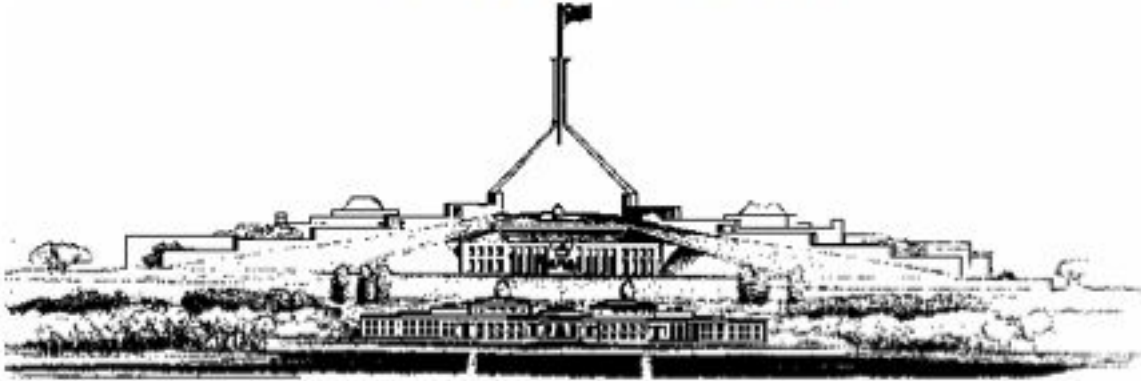




COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PROOF

Federation Chamber

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Fairfax Electorate: Small Business

SPEECH

Wednesday, 12 February 2025

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

Date Wednesday, 12 February 2025	Source House
Page 33	Proof Yes
Questioner	Responder
Speaker O'Brien, Ted MP	Question No.

Mr TED O'BRIEN (Fairfax) (09:57): I am deeply concerned about small businesses across the Sunshine Coast. Many of them are struggling enormously. Unless you yourself are directly involved in a small business, you often don't know how hard they're doing it. We see 'for lease' signs right across the region, but these empty shops are only really the tip of the iceberg. We know that right across Australia, under this Labor government, 27,000 businesses have gone under. That's 27,000 businesses that have gone insolvent. The Sunshine Coast is not immune to that. In fact, we've been directly in the firing line. According to ASIC data, the sector of the economy that has been most impacted is the construction sector, constituting about 27 per cent of all insolvencies. If you look at the Sunshine Coast, the sector which has the highest number of registered businesses is the construction sector. In other words, our biggest sector with the most businesses is the very sector most impacted by Labor government policy and the rate of insolvencies. ASIC say that the second most impacted sector is accommodation, food and hospitality. Again, that's a major sector on the Sunshine Coast, which is why so many of our residents, amidst a cost-of-living crisis, are doing it especially tough, because they either own a small business or they work for a small business. Those who aren't closing their doors are struggling enormously. They're on their knees trying to make ends meet.

For the coalition's part, this is why we have been unashamedly pro small business, ensuring we have plans to help small business. As part of that, we have announced that we will be extending the asset value eligible for the instant asset write-off up to \$30,000 and making it permanent. We'll be introducing a capped deduction of up to \$20,000 for business related meal expenses, giving our hospitality sector the real boost it needs. On industrial relations, we'll be reversing the damaging aspects of Labor's complex industrial relations reforms, including returning to a simple definition of a 'casual worker'. In other areas, we'll be cutting red tape, we'll be making energy cheaper, cleaner and more consistent. We need to return to the days where small businesses are treated with the respect they deserve. That's what a coalition government will do.