



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Federation Chamber

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Calare Electorate: Small Business

SPEECH

Monday, 28 May 2012

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Questioner
Speaker Cobb, John, MP

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Mr JOHN COBB (Calare) (10:32): I rise to speak about the trials and tribulations experienced by small businesses in my electorate of Calare. Unfortunately, thanks to this Labor government they have more trials and tribulations. There are well over 10,000 small businesses in Calare alone. Last month Senator Arthur Sinodinos, my colleague in the Senate and the chairman of the Coalition Deregulation Taskforce, and I met with small business owners in Bathurst and Orange to listen to their concerns and their hopes for the future of small business in regional Australia. Over-regulation, unnecessary compliance costs and red tape are crippling small business, and the message we heard loud and clear is that the current government and those members opposite are not listening. Not only are they not listening to these concerns; they have gone and hit small business with the world's biggest carbon tax but with no indication of how it will affect small business and with no compensation.

Recently Labor's so-called duty senator for my electorate of Calare was on a panel of speakers at a post-budget forum in Bathurst. The duty senator told the audience that the carbon tax will cost the average household \$9.90 a week and that the government will compensate those households with \$10 a week, totally ignoring everything they have not thought about and the costs that every facet of everyday life will cause ordinary people—even the Salvation Army. But, when asked how much the carbon tax will cost small business each week, he could not answer. He had no idea. It was a disgrace.

As one panellist pointed out, the Howard government invested a great deal of time and effort to educate and prepare business for the introduction of the GST, but this government has done nothing to prepare business for the world's biggest carbon tax. The owner of your local corner store, your hairdresser and your plumber will all be hurt by the government's carbon tax, but the Prime Minister, the Treasurer and all those sitting opposite have made it clear they do not care. The coalition does care. We formed the Coalition Deregulation Taskforce last year to look at ways to reduce the costs and burdens of regulation to business by at least \$1 billion a year, and the opinions of small business in Calare are very much a part of that. We set up this task force because, unlike Labor, the coalition wants to help small business. Unlike Labor, we want to help small business grow and prosper because, unlike Labor, we know small business in Calare is the heart of it.