



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Federation Chamber

BILLS

Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2014-2015

Consideration in Detail

SPEECH

Thursday, 19 June 2014

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

Date Thursday, 19 June 2014
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Questioner
Speaker Van Manen, Bert, MP

Source House
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Responder
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Mr VAN MANEN (Forde) (10:24): I would like to thank the Minister for Small Business for his wonderful advocacy for the small business sector during his term in the portfolio, both in opposition and now in government. It is interesting to reflect that for six years of the previous government, and now in our current term in government, we have had the same person in this portfolio. I think the previous government had six ministers. It has provided the small to medium business sector with consistent representation and a consistent voice. This is a very important segment of our economy. As touched on earlier, six years ago it employed some 53 per cent of the workforce and it is now down to 43 per cent. But more importantly, in my electorate of Forde it employs a very large proportion of our workforce. There are small to medium businesses in construction, manufacturing and retail, and we have some 7½ thousand of those small businesses.

The minister was recently at one of our chamber breakfasts, which was greatly appreciated. One telling thing at that breakfast was when those businesses were asked if they would employ another person if red tape, regulation, the carbon tax and other imposts from the previous government were taken away and they almost unanimously said yes. We took 23 terrific policies to the election that we are now rolling out. Minister, this is a great opportunity for you to inform the House about how the initiatives outlined in our election policies and commitments are going to strengthen small businesses, not only in my electorate of Forde but also in the nation more generally.