



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**Federation Chamber**

**CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS**

**Automotive Industry**

**SPEECH**

**Wednesday, 12 February 2014**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

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<b>Questioner</b>		<b>Responder</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	Vamvakinou, Maria, MP	<b>Question No.</b>	

**Ms VAMVAKINO**U (Calwell) (10:55): I want to place on record my very heartfelt sadness for those Australian workers in the car manufacturing sector who have lost and will lose their livelihoods as a result of the end of the car-making industry in Australia. The final curtain comes with Toyota's decision to shut down its operations, following similar announces by Ford and Holden last year. It was only a short while ago that I stood in this place lamenting the closure of the Ford manufacturing plant in my electorate. While lamenting the loss of thousands of jobs, I spoke about the repercussions of losing such an iconic employer in Calwell and I raised my concerns about the long-term impact and the devastating effect it would have on our local community, both directly and indirectly. With Toyota now going, it is estimated that some 30,000 jobs will be lost in Victoria alone because of the much wider and far-reaching repercussions and effects on the automotive industry, therefore putting tens of thousands of other related jobs at risk. Ford workers in Broadmeadows are now being offered earlier than initially expected voluntary redundancies as the car giant moves to accelerate its shutdown of manufacturing in Victoria. The company intends to shed 300 positions by June this year and hopes workers will take up redundancy offers rather than be forced out of employment.

Various excuses and justifications can be attributed to the closure of Australia's car-making industry and there is much debate and counter debate about the value of having preserved car-making jobs in this country. That debate is yet to run its course, but the immediate and urgent question that should concern us all is: what now for thousands of Australian workers who lose their jobs and livelihoods and, more importantly, where are the new jobs they are supposedly going to able to apply for and are hoping for going to come from? After Toyota's announcement, the Prime Minister said:

The important thing to remember is, while some businesses close, other businesses open; while some jobs end, other jobs start.

These pronouncements offer no consolation or any tangible hope to workers, especially workers in my electorate who have lost their jobs. They certainly offer no consolation or any hope to the thousands of workers who stand to lose their jobs in my home state of Victoria, not to mention across the country. For the sake of these workers, I hope the government is aware of something we are not aware of. I also believe that the government and this parliament need to take a dose of good old-fashioned patriotism. Then it might find the courage and the passion to fight for Australian jobs because fighting for Australian jobs today means we are fighting to secure jobs for young Australians in the future.