



Steven Miles

DEPUTY PREMIER OF QUEENSLAND

WORKING TOGETHER FOR QUEENSLAND

29 October 2020

Mr Graham Moloney
General Secretary
Queensland Teachers' Union
Email: gtu@gtu.asn.au

Dear Mr Moloney

Thank you for your letter of 3 September 2020 regarding Labor's policy commitments in the 2020 Queensland election, in particular in relation to TAFE.

I note that Minister Fentiman wrote to the Queensland Teachers' Union (QTU) on 24 September 2020 outlining the Palaszczuk Labor Government's significant achievements in rescuing and strengthening TAFE Queensland over the last five years.

The Palaszczuk Labor Government's strong health response to the COVID-19 pandemic has meant that we can now start to deliver our plan for economic recovery. I'm pleased to outline our plan to further strengthen TAFE Queensland to ensure it continues to play a pivotal role in opening the doors of opportunity to all Queenslanders and continues to provide secure employment for the hardworking educators within the TAFE system.

I'm proud to outline this substantial plan below in greater detail for the QTU and its members who are employed by TAFE Queensland.

Equipping TAFE for our future

Now, more than ever, it is important that Queenslanders have access to well-paid and secure jobs as we continue to embark on our road to recovery. We must continue to ensure that, as our economy recovers, we don't leave anyone behind.

Since 2015, the Palaszczuk Labor Government has rescued and strengthened TAFE Queensland to make sure it can continue to deliver the quality and life-changing training and skilling many Queenslanders need.

Our record on investing in TAFE facilities, ensuring Queenslanders have access to world-class training in cutting-edge facilities, remains unmatched by the LNP. Since 2017, we have invested over \$150 million in redeveloping and modernising TAFE campuses – from the Torres Strait to the Gold Coast.

If re-elected, the Palaszczuk Labor Government will invest an additional \$100 million into equipping our TAFEs to help skill and train Queenslanders in the jobs of the future, which includes:

- advanced manufacturing hubs in Cairns, Townsville and Eagle Farm
- agriculture, horticulture and aquaculture training centres in Bowen, Bundaberg and Cannonvale with an expansion of the Rural Centre of Excellence in Toowoomba
- robotics training in Eagle Farm, South Bank and Ipswich
- a new hydrogen and renewable energy training facility in Townsville
- a new cyber security operations training centre in Cairns, Mooloolaba and South Bank
- a fitout for a new Robina TAFE
- investment into CQUniversity to expand the Mackay Ooralea Trade Training Centre and to help kickstart CQU's TAFE Centre of Excellence in Rockhampton

This \$100 million investment will also provide a much-needed boost to local industry and support more than 200 local jobs during construction. Together, we will help provide traditional, emerging and growth industries with the skilled workers they need to grow our economy, foster innovation and ensure that Queensland remains competitive.

By contrast, in a mere three years, the former Newman LNP Government ripped \$170 million from TAFE funding, closed and consolidated TAFE campuses, priced out 40,000 Queenslanders from a qualification and critically, sacked 2,100 TAFE staff.

Free TAFE and free apprenticeships for under 25s

The Palaszczuk Labor Government is committed to doing all we can to ensure Queenslanders are provided with the opportunities to have a decent and secure job – because we know there is dignity in having a job.

We acknowledge and value the vital role QTU members play within TAFE in teaching, mentoring and equipping Queenslanders with the skills and knowledge they need to help them get into a job.

We know young people were already struggling before the health crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic has made an even bigger impact. Many young Queenslanders need the opportunity to help them gain the skills and qualifications employers need. This is why we are proud of our free TAFE for year 12 graduates and free apprenticeships and traineeships for under 21s programs, which have supported over 24,000 young people across Queensland.

That is why a re-elected Palaszczuk Labor Government will invest an additional \$21 million in expanding this incredibly important program to include all young Queenslanders under 25. Through this investment, over 37,000 young people under 25 will be able to access free training in 165 priority qualifications in priority industries including:

- automotive and manufacturing
- health services
- hospitality
- engineering
- aged and disability support
- early childhood education

By investing in critical programs like free TAFE and free apprenticeships, we are providing tens of thousands of young Queenslanders with a key to a future successful career in the industries that drive Queensland's economy.

Critically, this also ensures that our TAFE remains supported, securing the future of its staff and growing its reputation as a quality VET provider.

Future commitments

The Palaszczuk Labor Government continues to commit to supporting Queenslanders to get the skills and training they need for meaningful and long-term careers.

Critically, we will continue to be committed to ensuring young Queenslanders, especially vulnerable young people, have viable pathways from school into further training and jobs. We will also continue to advocate for the continuation of the Adult Migrant Education Program to the Federal Government, to ensure that AMEP staff across Queensland remains supported.

Leadership & Jobs vs Reckless Cuts

We know our work isn't finished, especially as we plan for the emergence of a strong and more resilient Queensland economy. We need skilled workers that will be able to fill the jobs of high-demand traditional, emerging and growth industries – supported by the nation's best educators.

Now is not the time to risk the LNP – their record of cuts speaks for itself.

Only a Palaszczuk Labor Government will equip TAFE to give Queenslanders the skills they need to get a job and secure their future. More importantly, we are securing TAFE Queensland's future and the future of its staff and our valuable educators.

Queensland's ongoing economic and health recovery requires leadership and stability, and Deb Frecklington and the LNP are a risk to that recovery.

I urge you to communicate with your members the Palaszczuk Labor Government's plan for TAFE and skilling Queenslanders. Should the Palaszczuk Labor Government be re-elected, we look forward to continuing to work with you for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

Yours sincerely



STEVEN MILES MP

Deputy Premier

Minister for Health

Minister for Ambulance Services

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