MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

When did surviving become the measure of success for Queensland's small businesses? Fraser Coast business owner calls for meaningful change, challenging how small business support is delivered and measured.

Fraser Coast business owner, author and volunteer business mentor Josh Rimmington is calling for a rethink of how Queensland supports its small businesses, urging a greater focus on long-term business viability, reducing operational pressures and addressing the hidden human cost of business ownership.

In an open letter to Queensland Minister for Small and Family Business, the Honourable Steve Minnikin MP, Mr Rimmington raises a series of challenging questions about the realities facing business owners and whether existing approaches to business support are reaching those who need them most.

As the founder and director of JR Marketing Group and a volunteer mentor through the Queensland Government's Mentoring for Growth program, Mr Rimmington regularly works with business owners across numerous industries.

He says the nature of those conversations is changing.
"Increasingly, some of the conversations I hear aren't about expansion, innovation or new opportunities.
"They're about cash flow, increasing costs, staffing pressures and uncertainty.
"They're about whether to employ another person or whether they can afford to keep the people they already have.
"They're about whether the business is still worth the personal sacrifice."

Challenging the conversation around small business support

While acknowledging existing Queensland Government initiatives, Mr Rimmington is encouraging a greater focus on the tangible outcomes these programs deliver.
"Are we genuinely supporting small businesses, or are we just getting better at talking about supporting them?"
The letter questions whether traditional consultation processes and support programs are reaching business owners who are too time-poor or financially stretched to participate.
It also challenges the reliance on campaigns encouraging consumers to shop locally as a response to the difficulties facing small businesses.
"Supporting small business should be about more than encouraging people to spend money with them. It should also be about making it easier for those businesses to operate."

The hidden human cost of business ownership

Having spoken publicly about his own mental health challenges, Mr Rimmington is also highlighting the importance of recognising the personal toll that business ownership can take.
"We often talk about the importance of creating mentally healthy workplaces, and rightly so.

“But who is looking after the person responsible for creating and maintaining that workplace? “Who is checking on the employer?”

He believes greater emphasis needs to be placed on early intervention, accessibility of existing support services and addressing the underlying pressures contributing to business owner stress.

“We cannot keep asking business owners to be more resilient without also examining what we’re asking them to endure.”

Three practical steps towards meaningful change

Acknowledging that many economic pressures fall outside the direct control of the Queensland Government, Mr Rimmington is proposing three starting points:

- **Listen differently:** Engage with a broader cross-section of regional business owners, particularly those who do not traditionally participate in formal government consultations.
- **Measure outcomes, not just activity:** Place greater emphasis on whether government initiatives are delivering tangible improvements in business confidence, viability and the ease of doing business.
- **Find the small changes that can make a big difference:** Identify unnecessary administrative burdens, duplicated reporting requirements, barriers to accessing support and state-controlled costs that disproportionately affect small businesses.

Mr Rimmington has offered to assist with further consultation and facilitate conversations with regional business owners across the Fraser Coast and Bundaberg.

Change starts somewhere

Mr Rimmington emphasised that the purpose of the open letter is not to make a partisan political statement, but to encourage constructive discussion and practical action.

“I’m not asking for businesses to be guaranteed success.

“I’m asking that we give them a fair opportunity to achieve it.”

He believes the limitations of state government should not prevent progress in areas where meaningful improvements can be made.

“We regularly describe small businesses as the backbone of our economy.

“But if they’re the backbone of our economy, shouldn’t we be asking how much pressure that backbone can take before it starts to break?”

The open letter concludes with a simple message:

“We might not be able to change everything. But that’s no reason not to change something.”

The full open letter to the Honourable Steve Minnikin MP, dated 23 November 2026, accompanies this media release.

— ENDS —

About Josh Rimmington

Josh Rimmington is a Fraser Coast business owner, author, speaker and founder and director of JR Marketing Group. Through his business, speaking engagements and volunteer work with the Queensland Government’s Mentoring for Growth program, he works with business owners across a range of industries, helping them navigate challenges and identify opportunities for growth.

He is passionate about regional business development, entrepreneurship, mental health awareness and creating sustainable opportunities for small businesses.

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Attachment: Open Letter – Small business in Queensland – Are we listening to the people behind the businesses? (23 November 2026)