

Mr HOPPER: My question is to the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. Can the minister, once again, please explain why this government will not fast-track access to the \$60 million offered by the Commonwealth government for low-interest loans to drought-stricken producers?

Madam SPEAKER: I call the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. You have one minute.

Mr McVEIGH: I thank the member for the question. I repeat yet again in this House, as I have done outside the House, this government's stance on the proposed Farm Finance package put forward by the much-maligned Joe Ludwig, the Labor Minister for Agriculture, along with Bob Katter, the leader of the Katter Australian Party. The Farm Finance package remains lacking in detail. It has been subject to significant investigation by me and the ministers for agriculture in New South Wales, Victoria, Northern Territory and Western Australia. Simply, the detail remains lacking.

What we can find out is that the federal government proposes to get its money at three per cent and then put it out to farmers at 4½ per cent. They want to profiteer from farmers caught in drought. We ministers in the relevant states see that as disgraceful. We will not sign up for something that is lacking in detail and will only affect farmers in a worse way.

(Time expired)

Madam SPEAKER: The time for questions has expired.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

School Group Tour

Madam SPEAKER: Before we move to the next matter, I wish to acknowledge school students visiting today from Moreton Downs State School in the electorate of Murrumbidgee.

PROTECTION OF PRIME AGRICULTURAL LAND AND OTHER LAND FROM COAL SEAM GAS MINING BILL

Introduction



Mr HOPPER (Condamine—KAP) (10.31 am): I present a bill for an act to protect particular land, including prime agricultural land, for future generations by prohibiting the carrying out on such land of coal seam gas exploration and mining and associated activities. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Protection of Prime Agricultural Land and Other Land from Coal Seam Gas Mining Bill 2013.

Tabled paper: Protection of Prime Agricultural Land and Other Land from Coal Seam Gas Mining Bill 2013, explanatory notes.

This issue has been going on for quite some time and needs to come to a head. The primary objectives of the Protection of Prime Agricultural Land and Other Land from Coal Seam Gas Mining Bill 2013 are: to prohibit all coal seam gas and exploration mining activities east of the Condamine River from Chinchilla to the New South Wales border and from the longitudinal line running directly through the Chinchilla post office east to the coast; and to protect any land under the Strategic Cropping Land Act 2011.

Fundamentally, the bill is intended to protect prime agricultural land from coal seam gas exploration and mining to ensure the sustainability of the agriculture industry and food security into the future for all Queenslanders. Importantly, the designated areas described in this bill are identified as some of the richest agricultural areas in Queensland. The current Liberal National Party government and former Labor governments alike have failed to protect the agricultural land defined in this bill. Accordingly, this bill is intended, without discretion, to unreservedly protect the defined agricultural land.

It is held that there is an urgent need for a firm stance against the coal seam gas industry pending the establishment of science to guarantee the risk mitigation of Queensland's prime agricultural land including that defined within this bill.

For the purposes of absolute clarity, this bill does not seek to prohibit the coal seam gas industry, but it specifically excludes coal seam gas exploration and mining in areas designated in this bill, including to protect underground water that may potentially be affected, either for a particular

period or irreversibly. Importantly, this bill is also intended to contribute to food security for all Queenslanders.

Finally, the bill seeks to provide representation for primary producers in rural and regional Queensland who have arguably been silenced and dismissed by the present and past Queensland governments. I seek leave to have the rest of my speech incorporated in Hansard.

Leave granted.

Of serious concern it was revealed that in 2010 employees of the Queensland Government were not given enough time or basic information to assess two Queensland projects worth \$38 billion. This information was exposed through documents obtained under Right to Information laws which showed that approval processes were rushed and arguably put commercial considerations ahead of the environment. This is just one of the key reasons for the Bill, however, it will also protect the long term sustainability of prime agricultural land in designated area.

Achievement of the Objectives

The Bill achieves the objectives by way of the proposed and set forth.

Alternative ways of achieving policy objectives

There are no alternative ways of achieving the reform to protect prime agricultural land.

Estimated Cost for Government Implementation

Any costs in relation to the amendments will be met from existing agency resources.

Consistency with Fundamental Legislative Principles

This protects the agricultural industry and citizens whose rights and liberties would otherwise be significantly and unjustifiably restricted or impacted because of environmental harm to prime agricultural land.

Consultation

There has been no formal consultation.

Notes on Provisions

Part 1 Preliminary

Clause 1 establishes the short title as the Protection of Prime Agricultural Land and Other Land from Coal Seam Gas Mining Act 2013.

Part 2 Purpose and Application of Act

Clause 2 provides for the protection of prime agricultural land from coal seam gas mining in the designated area as described and further ensures sustainability for future generations.

Clause 3 Identifies prime agricultural land and prohibits coal seam gas mining or any activity associated with it.

Clause 4 Act binds all persons but creates exceptions from prosecution in special cases.

Clause 5 This is an overruling Act.

Part 3 Interpretation

Clause 6 provide for specific definitions under the Act

Clause 7 defines the term Coal Seam Gas (CSG) activity

Clause 8 defines the meaning of prime agricultural land and other land defined within the Act.

Part 4 Protection of Prime Agricultural Land

Clause 9 specifies penalty provisions under the Act.

Part 5 Miscellaneous Provisions

Clause 10 Liability of Executive Officers specifies liabilities and penalties imposed under the Act.

Clause 11 Confirms no compensation is available under this Act.

Part 6 Transitional Powers

Clause 12 defines the commencement of the Act.

Clause 13 In the case that exploration has started, all reasonable steps must be taken to restore the environment and/or land as exploration will be prohibited from continuation under this Act.

Clause 14 Any petroleum or gas tenure paid for future exploration will be refunded if tenure is removed under this Act.

Schedule

Prime Agricultural Land Map:- trigger map for potential Strategic Cropping Land (SCL).

First Reading

Mr HOPPER (Condamine—KAP) (10.34 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee

Madam SPEAKER: Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee.

~~APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL~~


~~APPROPRIATION BILL~~

~~REVENUE AMENDMENT AND TRADE AND INVESTMENT QUEENSLAND BILL~~

~~Second Reading (Cognate Debate)~~

~~Resumed from 6 June (see p. 2174), on motion of Mr Nicholls—~~

~~That the bills be now read a second time.~~

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (10.34 am): I rise today to speak on a budget that is committed to growing the Queensland economy, rebuilding Queensland and making Queensland communities more resilient for the future. Today I can certainly inform the residents of Albert, the northern gateway to the Gold Coast, Australia's playground, we have a budget focused on rebuilding our great state and delivering front-line services.

Queensland will never forget the trail of destruction inflicted upon it by ex-Tropical Cyclone Oswald and the flooding that followed. The financial costs of the flooding events of early 2013 are expected to pass \$2.5 billion. The emotional costs are endless.

The residents of Albert certainly did breathe a sigh of relief as we escaped the majority of immense devastation which we saw in other parts of Queensland. However, we did suffer riverine and localised flooding, power loss, fallen trees and loss of business income and infrastructure due to these natural events. Once again, the John Muntz Causeway was closed to motorists for an extended period of time, which resulted in both physical and financial loss for Albert residents.

This government has got on with the job of funding a new bridge. The expressions of joy about the construction of a new bridge for the residents of Upper Coomera, Oxenford and Tamborine Mountain who rely on this major arterial road know no bounds. Many residents have stopped me in the street to say how pleased they are to see the actual progress—yes, progress—on the construction of this crucial piece of infrastructure. It is quite humbling to know that we as a government have recognised the need for and provided this vital piece of infrastructure. Residents can now see the new concrete pylons finally being completed. I should also inform the House that I was recently invited to join the workers at the construction site to celebrate the completion of this important milestone. In addition to the John Muntz Causeway, this government has continued to fund important road safety infrastructure. Beaudesert-Beenleigh Road is another important arterial road in the electorate of Albert which has been recognised in this budget. Many residents have contacted my office with regard to the repairs of safety barriers. I am pleased to inform the House that funds have been allocated to help alleviate these concerns. Waterford-Tamborine Road has also received funds for much needed overlay pavement.

The budget is all about future proofing. One of the most important assets in this state is our children. Education is a key cornerstone of this government and the Great Teachers = Great Results program will deliver real results for educational outcomes. We understand the important contributions made by teachers, principals and the local school P&C committees. These individuals take great