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Tuesday, 26 April 2016

Research Director  
Agriculture and Environment Committee  
Parliament House  
BRISBANE QLD 4000  
Email: [vminquiry@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:vminquiry@parliament.qld.gov.au)

Dear Sir/Madam

I wish to support the following aspects of the proposed *Vegetation Management (Reinstatement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016* for the following reasons:

The proposed Bill will:

1. Removes the ability to get a permit clear for so-called High Value Agriculture, and thus stop large-scale clearing of remnant woodlands.
2. Restores protections for ecologically important regrowing woodlands ('High Value Regrowth') on freehold and Aboriginal land.
3. Restores protections for trees next to riverbanks ('riparian areas') and extending provisions from some to all Great Barrier Reef catchments.
4. Removes the 'oops' defence of claimed mistaken clearing, and restores the *starting* presumption that a landholder is responsible for clearing that takes place on their property.
5. It makes much of the prospective legislation retrospective to 17 March, in an attempt to deter panic clearing and panic applications.

The general public and politicians can no longer deny the existence of climate change and we must make every endeavour to deal with this issue whether it be by reducing emissions, saving endangered vegetation or implementing sustainable land use planning strategies. The world has experienced its highest monthly temperature departure among all 1,635 months on record, surpassing the previous all-time record set in February 2016 by 0.01°C (0.02°F).

The National Centres for Environmental Information has published an analysis of global weather conditions. This report, *Global Analysis- March 2016*, states that:

"Overall, the nine highest monthly temperature departures in the record have all occurred in the past nine months. March 2016 also marks the 11<sup>th</sup> consecutive month a monthly global temperature record has been broken, the longest such streak in NOAA's 137 years of record keeping." (Downloaded 26<sup>th</sup> April 2016)

We can't afford to remove vegetation without giving serious consideration to the environmental consequences such as the loss of habitat for endangered native species and the exposure of large areas of country to higher temperatures through loss of shade.

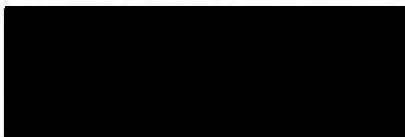
The removal of large and small areas of vegetation can result in significant issues of soil erosion which then causes flow-on effects by damaging riverine and marine ecosystems through flood waters carrying both soil and poisons downstream into receiving waters along the coastline.

We have all been made aware through both news reports and documentaries of the impact on the Great Barrier Reef of land clearing practices which have removed significant stands of native vegetation.

I have concerns at a local level. I have become aware that this legislation does not contain protective strategies for urban forest areas. In the last few years projects have been proposed for two heritage listed open space areas in the western suburbs of Brisbane which would require removal of vegetation. These areas are the Heritage listed Enoggera Reservoir and the Heritage listed Mt Coot-tha Forest. Tim Low has undertaken a study for Brisbane City Council in which he warned that these areas must be protected to provide a shelter and a transition area for endangered species of both fauna and flora in the event of climate change. The protection of these areas will be part of the toolkit for dealing with climate change issues in urban areas.

Tim produced his report in 2007 well before the bleaching of coral reefs along the Great Barrier Reef greatly aroused public concerns that climate change is well and truly here and must be addressed. The proposed legislation should be amended to ensure that legislation is included which protects and maintains the large areas of urban forest surrounding our most populous areas in South-East Queensland.

Yours sincerely

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Di Glynn BA Bed MURP Grad Dip Law