



**SENATOR THE HON. RON BOSWELL**  
 THE NATIONALS  
 SENATOR FOR QUEENSLAND

Mr Ian Rickuss MP  
 Member for Lockyer  
 Chair, Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee  
 PARLIAMENT HOUSE  
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Dear Mr Rickuss

**Submission re: North Stradbroke Island Protection and Sustainability and Another Act Amendment Bill 2013**

I would like to congratulate the Newman Government for honouring their commitment to deliver a better outcome for the North Stradbroke Island community.

The North Stradbroke Island Protection and Sustainability and Another Act Amendment Bill 2013 (the Bill) will ensure that jobs and the livelihood on the Island are protected for many years to come.

The reality for this small Island community sand mining injects the necessary financial support through wages and community grants and donations that keep this community very much alive.

This is evident by the very fact that Sibelco is not just the largest employer on the Island but they are also the largest employer in the Redland City Council area. They employ more than 500 directly and indirectly within the council area. They have a great record of employing indigenous people. The Bill will ensure that 60 indigenous men and women will keep their jobs on Stradbroke Island.

When the former Labor Government announced that sand mining would end on North Stradbroke Island in 2019, they provided no support for the local community. After the announcement, there was no action taken by the then Government to implement an economic transition program across the Island, to ensure that the community could be shielded as much as possible from the closure of the sand mines on the Island.

As a Federal representative of the local community who has always taken an interest in Stradbroke Island, I have spent a lot of time thinking about this decision and the impacts the 2011 decision would have had on my constituents. It is clear to me this decision by the Labor Government was clearly not made with the community in mind, nor was there any meaningful engagement with the community about the closure of the mines by 2019.

Ultimately the decision, motivated by a desire to secure Green preferences for the 2012 election, it put an enormous strain on this community. Rather than provide certainty, it provided more questions with no answers.

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The announcement on the 17 October by the Honourable Andrew Cripps, Minister for Natural Resources and Mines has gone a long way to provide some relief to this community. The continuation of mining until 2035 will allow the community, in cooperation with government, to identify and deliver key economic transition opportunities that will see North Stradbroke Island.

I strongly urge the Newman Government to consider this Bill as the beginning of a journey, as for many local community members, there is still much work to be done in undoing the damage done by the former government, and restoring a level faith in the community that there is still hope for a prosperous future on the Island.

Since 2011, I have spoken to many residents about the closure of sand mining, and it is clear from my engagement with the community feel very uncertain and insecure about what future lay ahead of them. There was a sense that they had no control over their future and the government was using their home for their own political gain.

By allowing sand mining to continue, many people who live on the island and have holiday properties and businesses there now have certainty about their future, and the future of the Island itself.

These residents realise that the transport fuel and other facilities supplied there are underpinned by Sibelco, and without the continuation of mining would not be supplied to the island. Sibelco Australia has contributed more than a million dollars to the community and community groups in the last financial year alone. The removal of this financial support so quickly with no other support available would have devastated the community.

I strongly urge the committee to support the Amendment Bill in order to provide the support and certainty this community requires to feel secure about their future, and for that of their neighbours and their community.

Yours sincerely,



Ron Boswell

Senator for Queensland

22<sup>nd</sup> October 2013