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Mr Aaron Harper MP
Health and Environment Committee Chair
Via email: hec@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Chair,

RE: Written response to submissions to the *Environmental and Other Legislation (Reversal of Great Barrier Reef Protection Measures) Amendment Bill 2021*

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this brief written response to the 32 submissions received relating to the *Environmental and Other Legislation (Reversal of Great Barrier Reef Protection Measures) Amendment Bill 2021*.

It was encouraging for me to note that of the submissions, around 60 per cent (19 in total) were supportive of the Bill itself or in general have concerns with regards to the ever-increasing regulatory burden being placed upon the agricultural sector under the guise of protecting the Great Barrier Reef from the effects of climate change and compromised water quality.

Naturally the former issue of climate change is well beyond the scope and control of the sugar cane farmers working and living within the six designated Great Barrier Reef Catchment areas and, despite repeat references to the "overwhelming scientific consensus on the detrimental impacts of poor water quality of the Great Barrier Reef" (as per Submission 5), such bold statements of fact fail to acknowledge that:

1. Scientific findings show that there is almost zero land derived sediment on the Great Barrier Reef and that the Pacific Ocean flushes the reef, purifying the water every minute of every day (as per Submission 12).
2. Sediment and chemicals running off farms only affect inshore reefs, or about 3 per cent of the total Great Barrier Reef (as per Submission 15).
3. Australian Institute of Marine Science representatives have acknowledged that the coral growth rates of Porites have not been linked to water quality, and that reef calcification reduction has been linked to marine heatwaves and coral bleaching (as per Submission 18).
4. Crown of Thorns Starfish outbreaks in the southern region at the Swains Reefs (Fitzroy catchment area) come from oceanic nutrient upwelling and not from land-based runoff (as per Submission 23).



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5. The current “science” (that underpins the regulations the Bill seeks to overturn) relies heavily on modelling and assumptions, and there is further need for independent reviews, data replication and the use of empirical data on this topic before an unbending scientific consensus can be reached on the impact of water run-off, and more specifically individual farming practices, on the health of the Great Barrier Reef (as per Submission 32).

I would like to acknowledge and thank all those who took the time to provide submissions to this Bill, your contributions are valued.

I now look forward to further robust debate and careful consideration of this Bill, which as demonstrated through the submissions received is backed by significant community and industry support.

Best Regards,

Nick Dametto MP
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