



Speech by

**JEFF KNUTH**

**MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN**

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Hansard 9 November 1999

**TEMPORARY COASTAL DWELLING PROTECTION BILL**

**Mr KNUTH** (Burdekin—IND) (10.15 a.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

I introduce the Temporary Coastal Dwellings Protection Bill 1999 in an effort to clear up the current state of confusion and perplexity that surrounds the future of coastal fishing huts. This Bill was not designed to be political; it was designed to give some form of security while easing the hearts and minds of the families who use these huts in rural and regional Queensland.

In my own electorate of Burdekin there are estimated to be around 1,000 fishing huts. Each hut is used by up to 30 different families in a year. It is a heritage of Queensland's way of life that some city folk will never understand. To the hut users, it is a chance to get away for the weekend with the family—for fathers to get to know their sons and for mothers to get to know their daughters, to catch fish and crabs, to enjoy the environment, or to sit back with a beer or a book and retreat from the pressures of life. Without these huts a host of people would probably not be able to afford a holiday elsewhere.

Families who use these huts are not wealthy; they are workers, be they blue collar workers or farmers. Rural and regional families have no Dreamworld, Movieworld or Seaworld. They do not have the wonderful facilities that city folk have at their disposal. All they have is these retreats—a retreat that has become a culture for so many.

Members of the Chamber, soften your hearts in order to understand the situation. What else do children and mums and dads have in rural electorates? Everything is being stripped. Services, banks and businesses are going to the wall. Is this going to happen to fishing huts also? For the sake of compassion, I plead that everyone will support this Bill.

The Bill is strict. It complies with the environment as well as legal and safety requirements. It caters for the few squatter's huts that remain. However, no illegal fishing hut which has been built in the last 10 years will be covered by this Bill. This Bill gives all complying fishing huts a 20-year non-renewable tenure. After 20 years, all PTO and squatter's huts are to be disassembled and removed from the site. The provisions of this Bill will comply with the thinking of all walks of politics, whilst at the same time addressing the fears of hut owners. This Bill gives current squatters and PTO's the assurance of legal tenure for a maximum of 20 years. This will put the minds of hut owners at rest.

The Minister for Natural Resources and Environment has stated that it is the long-term objective of his Government to remove all huts along the east coast of Queensland. This Bill complies with his wishes, whilst giving the hut owners a time period in which to abide by the provisions of the Bill. This is a fair Bill for both sides of the argument. It is a Bill of compassion. I present the Temporary Coastal Dwellings Protection Bill 1999 to the Chamber.

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