



Speech by

KEN TURNER

MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA

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TRAWL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Mr TURNER (Thuringowa—IND) (10.12 a.m.): Queenslanders should be very concerned about the possible decimation of the commercial fishing industry. Certain groups are continually lobbying the State and Federal Governments with self-interested demands which, in most cases, have no basis in fact and are based solely on emotive issues. They have no consideration for the greater community or for job losses in the commercial fishing sector.

The commercial fishing industry provides, directly and indirectly, approximately 22,000 jobs in Queensland. If further restrictions are imposed on the industry at this time, many fishing and land-based operators will go out of business, with consequent enormous job losses. The supply of fresh Queensland seafood is paramount to restaurants, fishmongers and exporters.

QFMA proposals for the trawl industry have been put forward after consultation with all sides of the industry and should be adopted. It is vital that our Queensland fisheries remain under State control. I urge the Minister for Primary Industries to ensure that this happens.

I have received numerous complaints from trawler owners who are concerned that, should the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's unnecessary recommendations be put into place, they will not be able to meet their commitments to family and financial institutions and that bankruptcy will be inevitable. Senator Hill is supposedly pushing the issue of unsustainability, but he cannot provide any sound scientific evidence which indicates that the trawl industry is not sustainable.

GBRMPA falsely tries to win support with such comments as trawling on the reef will cause reef damage. What rubbish! For obvious reasons, trawling over the reef is impossible. To implement more closures will only increase efforts in other areas. Sustainability will then be in question as a result of a more concentrated effort into a much smaller area. If the effort needs to be reduced, the Government must be prepared to compensate fishers and remove licences and vessels from the industry.

Let us take the power-play of Federal politics out of the equation and replace it with plain commonsense which will preserve job security for Queensland families. This is an opportunity for the Beattie Government to prove how serious it is about jobs. We have hundreds of fishermen who are screaming for help. Please throw them a lifeline as they are drowning in bureaucratic nonsense.
