



Speech by

Mr BRUCE LAMING

MEMBER FOR MOOLOOLAH

Hansard 22 June 2000

PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND NATURAL RESOURCES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Mr LAMING (Mooloolah—LP) (5.36 p.m.): I rise to speak briefly to the Primary Industries and Natural Resources Legislation Amendment Bill and note that one of its aims is the restructuring of fisheries management arrangements. Fisheries are of great importance to Queensland. Fish products and other high-quality primary products produced for the export market provide income and, of course, jobs to Queensland.

Speaking about jobs, evidently the Premier has given up on his 5% unemployment target. He has rushed off to blame the GST, the Asian economic crisis and the dive in the value of the Australian dollar instead of identifying and capitalising on real job creation opportunities. According to the Courier-Mail, the Premier claims to be determined to do everything he can to bring unemployment down to 5%, but he is not doing that.

If he were fair dinkum, he would be grabbing the 1,000 potential new jobs on offer in Queensland's primary industries by giving Access Queensland, a company dedicated to this aim, a bit of real help. Instead of squandering nearly half a million dollars on an advertising program about an aborted fuel tax, he could have invested about the same amount in Access Queensland and potentially created more than 1,000 new jobs throughout Queensland's regions, mainly in primary industry. Why do I call it an investment? Because the Government gets its money back over a couple of years, plus interest—that is, 1,000 jobs. What a deal!

Honourable members do not have to take my word about those 1,000 jobs. I table letters from 11 businesspeople representing over 200 primary producer employers. They are all confident of this level of job creation if Access Queensland is given the level of start-up support that it needs. I have listed these job estimates in an attached summary, which sets out their products, the anticipated job creation and even their electorates. I strongly suggest that Government members take a keen interest in that summary before next week's Community Cabinet meeting so that they can make representations to the relevant Ministers before their own constituents beat them to it.

Talking of representations, Access Queensland has been advised that the Premier will not have time to meet with it next weekend. This is disappointing and unbelievable. I hope that the Minister for Primary Industries intends to be more proactive. I suggest that the Premier reconsider his decision in the light of the opportunity to create conservatively 1,000 new jobs, many in the north. Maybe that humble pie he talks about is worth a second helping.
