



Speech by

**ELISA ROBERTS**

**MEMBER FOR GYMPIE**

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Hansard 9 April 2002

**LAND PROTECTION [PEST AND STOCK ROUTE MANAGEMENT] BILL**

**Miss ELISA ROBERTS** (Gympie—ONP) (4.23 p.m.): I rise today to speak in support of the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Bill. But, whilst I strongly support all endeavours aimed at eradicating weeds and pest animals due to the adverse effects they can have on the environment and primary production, there are some areas of the bill that my community and I feel need addressing.

One area of concern is the often erratic approach many councils take in their approach to pest management and control. The lack of uniformity between councils regarding pest management is a real issue, with many holding different views on what they regard as a pest. Will this bill ensure an improved level of consistency between councils? How will this government ensure council compliance with the pest management plan? In order to ensure the effectiveness and success of this legislation, a coordinated approach needs to be taken between all shires. Will this state's councils also be provided with extra funding and staff levels in order for them to adequately carry out systematic inspections of designated areas and to implement the pest management plan?

As the minister would be aware, my electorate is suffering from increasing dingo and hybrid dog attacks. Will this legislation make any inroads into the lack of trained staff who are able to give permission for landowners to bait? The waiting period for baiting permission is far too long and there is a lack of departmental staff who are able to carry out the baiting. At the moment, to have one person trained to apply the bait, once permission is given by another employee of the department, takes over six months.

The five kilometre distance for baiting is also a hindrance to primary producers and adds to the huge delay in baiting. This is just not reasonable or viable when these producers are continually losing livestock and thousands of dollars in the process.

With regard to the control of pests in rural and regional Queensland, and to further enhance the outcomes of the pest management plan, will this government be providing any funding increases to our pest research stations?

I have received some queries in my electorate regarding riparian access to rivers by land-holders. The bill does not really address the situation which may occur when one land-holder carries out his or her responsibility regarding weed control when the adjacent landowner may not be complying with the regulations as set out in the legislation. This could lead to the spread of weeds by someone who is not being responsible. What redress does the responsible landowner have if the neighbouring land-holder has failed to keep up his end of the bargain and subsequently sullies the other person's area of the waterway? Will this government provide subsidies to land-holders who have to purchase large quantities of chemicals in order to treat and control the spread of pests?

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