



Speech by

Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR CHARTERS TOWERS

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MARINE PARKS BILL

Mr KNUTH (Charters Towers—NPA) (3.30 p.m.): I rise today to speak on the Marine Parks Bill. Whilst I recognise the need for proper management of our marine parks, we cannot support any measures that would pave the way for this government to bulldoze over the rights of the Queensland public. I believe this bill effectively allows for the government to introduce or amend a zoning or management plan without adequate consultation if it is complementary in nature. Ironically, it is the government's current complementary zoning plans that are causing so much angst along the length of the Queensland coast. Therefore, I cannot support any bill that would allow future additional zoning without consulting with those families affected.

I stand here today to speak on behalf of the thousands of Queensland families who often travel to the coast for a spot of swimming and fishing. Complementary zones will result in traditional fishing spots being closed to these families. If they do fish from these areas they will be hit hard with extreme fines. If the government continues with this bill, it will be responsible for discriminating against families with children who will lose the right to fish in traditional areas in the northern part of the state.

I would like to know what extensive study or report has been commissioned to show the impact of recreational line fishing on marine biodiversity. What is the name of this report and when was it completed? Approximately one million Queenslanders go fishing. Adults pack the picnic, kids pack the rods and collect the bait and they head off to the beach or the river for a spot of fishing. These people are being discriminated against because their chosen recreational activity is being banned without any facts to support the ban. No sound scientific report has been produced and there is little evidence to suggest that well-managed recreational line fishing reduces long-term sustainability.

Complementary zoning has the potential to stop people line fishing off the beaches along the coast in a cheap attempt to pander to the green lobby without real investigation into the lives affected. Complementary zoning is based on a precautionary principle, not facts, scientific reports or evidence. If all decisions were based on a precautionary principle, no person would ever drive a car or fly a plane. One thing that really concerns me is that the people within my electorate who like to fish may make a trip once a year to the ocean unsure of the invisible boundaries and could be hit with massive fines when their only crime is to catch a fish.

No-one in this House should be in any doubt of the extreme effects that complementary zoning will have on the lives of all Queenslanders. That is why any attempt by the Beattie government to introduce or amend a zoning plan without public consultation should be viewed with suspicion. The people I represent oppose the continued attempts by the government to silence their voice and deny them adequate consultation on issues that affect their daily lives. That is why I must oppose the bill before the House.