



Speech by

Rosemary Menkens

MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN

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MARINE PARKS (GREAT SANDY) ZONING PLAN: DISALLOWANCE OF STATUTORY INSTRUMENT

Mrs MENKENS (Burdekin—NPA) (8.20 pm): I rise to speak to the disallowance motion regarding the Marine Parks (Great Sandy) Zoning Plan 2006. It should come as no surprise to members that this disallowance motion has been introduced by the member for Toowoomba South, as he is a person who actually listens to the community.

In 2005 the draft plan was first released and it stirred great discontent at that time. It stirred discontent between commercial and recreational fishers in the Hervey Bay area. During the state election campaign, Bundaberg recreational fishers demonstrated against the plan. A group of local representatives, which included commercial and recreational fishing representatives, tourism industry stakeholders and local council representatives was set up in 2002 to advise the state government. However, the group was disbanded in June 2004. Earlier today I spoke about the lack of due process and consultation that is becoming the hallmark of the Beattie government. Tonight, we see the same lack of consultation and transparency.

Members of the public and stakeholders were promised unequivocally by the Premier and others that there would be extensive community involvement when framing the plan and before the legislation was introduced to parliament. Once again, they have been let down. They feel let down by their representatives on the other side of this House who have failed to stand up for their constituents. The Premier disbanded the working group, negating any positive and informed input that it could have had. Instead, he passed on the job to his own bureaucrats.

During the election campaign, the coalition announced that it would scrap the plan and revisit the process. The coalition announced that it would reform the working group and ensure that locals would have a say in the outcomes and that their concerns would be addressed.

No recognition has been given to the financial and social impacts caused by the impost of the new zoning plan. No offers of compensation to affected commercial fishing operators have been made and, as yet, no efforts have been made to compensate recreational fishers for the loss of easily accessible and productive fishing areas.

By moving this disallowance motion, the member for Toowoomba South is meeting the coalition's commitment to have the legislation overturned. He is listening to and addressing the concerns of hundreds of local residents, industry groups and tourism operators to try to bring some balance and common sense back into the issue. Of course it is essential that we have proper management of the natural resources of this area, which stretches from Tin Can Bay to Bundaberg, and that we plan for a viable future. However, we cannot ignore the wider ramifications of this legislation.

This plan was flawed from the start and members of this House are obligated to correct it. The marine park supports a variety of activities, including fishing, whale watching and turtle nesting, which makes it even more imperative that the area is managed properly. I cannot support a flawed process or flawed legislation. I really do urge all members to support the member for Toowoomba South.