



Speech by
Ros Bates

MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA

Hansard Friday, 19 June 2009

SPRINGBROOK

Ms BATES (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (3.46 am): Tonight I rise in this place to speak on behalf of the residents of Springbrook Mountain whose future prosperity remains under a cloud. It is now more than four years after what appears to be a surreptitious attempt by this Labor government to buy up as many houses and businesses in Springbrook as it can under the guise of environmental protection as part of the heritage listed national park which surrounds the residents. The Springbrook Plateau has a total of 160 acreage allotments, with many having been purchased in the 2008-09 state government \$40 million buy-up of Springbrook.

Mr SPEAKER: I am pausing the clock. We have no Hansard writers present in the gallery; it is being recorded but there is too much ambient noise. To be fair to the Hansard writers but also to be fair to the member for Mudgeeraba, I am going to wait until the noise dissipates.

Ms BATES: Despite repeated requests, residents and I are still waiting for the total number of properties purchased to be advised due to the secrecy of this buy-up by the Beattie-Bligh government.

There are only 360 house blocks in Springbrook with all subdivisions of properties ceasing in the late 1960s to preserve the rural charm and tourist attraction of the area. The 700-strong community has been thrown into turmoil with the closure of several national park tracks, the state government's buy-up of land and the recent eight-week closure of the Gold Coast-Springbrook Road. Several businesses have closed as a direct result of these events and a report presented to the Gold Coast City Council recently clearly showed the remaining businesses were suffering from a marked decrease in visitor numbers.

Under pressure from local anger at the way the buy-up was occurring, the former member for Mudgeeraba said in 2007—

But some people are misrepresenting the government's intentions and making wild claims that are hurting local business and putting unnecessary fear into the minds of local families. They are saying that the government is buying businesses in order to shut down the mountain's economy and its community.

... sales were brokered by a local land agent for properties primarily already on the market and the market value was paid.

This is an untruth. RP Data obtained for the period to the end of 2008 clearly showed properties were purchased at three times per hectare more than they were worth in 2006 in the middle of an economic downturn. We have heard the people of this government blaming the state of Queensland's finances on the global economic crisis, yet here we are with a government purchasing land at three times the value. It is no wonder we have a budget in deficit.

In addition, residents were told that there would be an environmental group that would report back to the community. The residents of Springbrook still have the right to know just where this reference group met, where the management plan is that was supposed to come from this group meeting and how they can justify the purchase of land when no environmental benefits other than an increase in feral cats and lantana has occurred.

Repeater Station Road is now—
(Time expired)