



Speech by


Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

Hansard Thursday, 7 April 2011

NORTH STRADBROKE ISLAND PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABILITY BILL

Mr O'Brien: Age before beauty.

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Multicultural Affairs) (3.02 pm): He means the other way around. Of course he means the other way around!

Mr Dempsey: I think you look more beautiful than him.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I will take that interjection. I rise in support of the North Stradbroke Island Protection and Sustainability Bill. From the outset I say—and I echo what the Minister for Education has just said—that I find it astonishing in this day and age that members opposite are not supporting this bill. I never would have thought that members opposite would not have the courage or the conviction to stand up and support something because it is the right thing to do. They have simply followed a party line. They do not have their individual conscience at heart. This is a fantastic initiative and I am very proud to be part of the Bligh government which is delivering this historic milestone today.

Here in Australia and particularly here in Queensland we are very fortunate to have on our doorstep some of the most beautiful natural environment in the world. One of the most cherished tourism destinations here in South-East Queensland is, of course, Stradbroke Island, or Straddie to the locals. The island is famous for its scenic headlands, its endless rolling surf and white sandy beaches, its great walks, whale watching, dolphin spotting and camping. I am sure that many of us here have heard people say many times, 'I'm heading to Straddie for the weekend,' or, 'The family is getting together this weekend to go camping.' It is a place we visited as kids and it is a place that we want to take our children to in the future. In fact, for the last 26 years my family has gone on an annual pilgrimage to Stradbroke. Straddie is truly an iconic Queensland destination. Straddie will be transformed from a mining island to a protected tourism destination with an environmentally sustainable economy. It will do this the smart and balanced way. By ensuring that we achieve a fast and practical end to mining on Straddie while also allowing enough time for an effective economic transition, an economic transition task force will provide leadership capitalising on economic opportunities and identifying appropriate forms of government support. In years to come people will look back on this time and appreciate the significant changes we are making in this House today. Down the track I am sure there will be a group of campers sitting on the beach at Straddie watching the sun go down on another perfect Straddie day and they will be grateful that we saved this beautiful island from a future of mining.

North Straddie is an island of rich and vast habitat with mangroves, wetlands, heathlands, freshwater lakes, rainforest and woodlands. It is the second largest sand island in the world, with the most diverse wetlands known in one place in Queensland. Very importantly, this bill is another tool to ensure that the knowledge of the Quandamooka people in caring for country is passed to non-Indigenous land managers and that the custom and culture of the Quandamooka people is allowed to continue. This government has been consulting with the Quandamooka people as the traditional owners of North Stradbroke Island for a number of years now. Any suggestion otherwise by those opposite is not only

ludicrous but offensive. Not surprisingly, the LNP has demonstrated a complete lack of understanding of both the role of the federal native title law and the mechanism of an independent judiciary in determining or mediating a claim of native title. If those opposite can come into this House and oppose any bill that paves the way for land justice outcomes, let the shame rest upon them. I will do no such thing. I recognise the Quandamooka people as the traditional owners of North Stradbroke Island. I pay my respect to all of those who fight for their people's undeniable right of recognition and respect both on North Stradbroke Island and around Australia. I commend this bill to the House.