




Speech By  
**Robbie Katter**  
MEMBER FOR MOUNT ISA

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### AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (9.20 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate on the Agriculture and Forestry Legislation Amendment Bill 2013. The parts of this bill that caught my attention relate to the amendments to the Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act, with particular reference to cats. Recently, in this House I raised the issue of cats. This issue was very acute some months ago but it seems to have died off a little bit as of late. Whilst there was an urgency associated with it, it has become that dry now in the area affected that they have died off a fair bit. But cats out there in that area have caused devastation. People in town complain about six of their seven chooks being taken. I see them in the car park at the back of my office all the time where I have never seen them before. There are no lizards left around town. I talk to the rangers up in the gulf. They tell me that when they are spraying prickly tree they see the feathers of all of those beautiful birds up in the gulf under the trees because the cats have taken them. I hear other stories of graziers seeing cats just sitting at the turkey's nest, which would be the only water around for miles. The cats would just sit there waiting for any birds in the area and they just take them. They are devastating wildlife and biodiversity out there at the moment. So any efforts made to control them is very commendable and worthwhile.

In relation to the amendments to the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act, there has been much discussion about stock routes. They have been a problem for a long time. They became very relevant this year with the drought. People have had to put cattle on the road and activate these stock routes. It has brought some of the problems related to them into the limelight. One issue is that the water has not been maintained over the years. There has been a lot of neglect. People who want to walk their cattle are supposed to spell them every so often, but there is no stock water available for them. Unfortunately, a lot of expense has to be incurred and a lot of work has to be done on the stock routes. It is pleasing to see that the government is giving that issue some attention. I had some friends who were putting cattle on the road. They were legitimately in trouble. They had no other choice but to put cattle on the road. They ended up having to put those cattle on trucks to try to sell them to get rid of them because some big grazier from South Australia bought a massive mob of cattle and, I think fairly unethically, dumped them all on the stock route ahead of those people. So a lot of people who were legitimately in trouble had to compete with this person who was taking—

**Mr Johnson:** Should never have been allowed to happen.

**Mr KATTER:** That was a bad thing to happen. It was regrettable. The fact that this issue is being addressed now is pleasing to see.

In relation to the amendments to the Veterinary Surgeons Act, there are a lot of anomalies. On the weekend I was talking to a vet friend of mine who works in the live export industry. He said that there were problems with cows in calf and the pregnancy testing being done by people who were not qualified to do that. There were cows in calf going on boats, which caused problems. I was made aware of a few issues like that. Obviously, there is a lot of room for improvement to tidy up that part of the industry.

There are many amendments contained in this bill that are applicable to issues of concern in my electorate. I am happy to support this bill.