




Speech By  
**Robbie Katter**

**MEMBER FOR MOUNT ISA**

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**STATE DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND INDUSTRY COMMITTEE:  
REPORT, MOTION TO TAKE NOTE**

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (11.27 am): I rise to make a contribution and acknowledge my participation in the committee and its inquiry on the future and continued relevance of government land tenure across Queensland. I am very appreciative of the way the inquiry was conducted by the chair, the member for Gympie, and the former chair, the member for Mirani. There was a good flow of debate and exchange of ideas. I was convinced that things were being done in the best interests of the report and that the best outcomes would be achieved.

I will speak about the most relevant points I took out of the report. I think some very good initiatives are contained in the report. Addressing land tenure is a very relevant activity for government because there are some antiquated provisions in the Land Act that need to be addressed.

I will start with the issue of the needs and aspirations of Indigenous Queenslanders in terms of an effective model for native title. I do appreciate, as our chair mentioned earlier, that the terms of reference were very broad. That was acknowledged in our discussion, but it did fall well short of the mark in addressing the issue of homeownership, although a recommendation was made to consider that. To me, that issue is paramount to promoting the wellbeing of and benefit to Indigenous Queenslanders. Homeownership is an economic building block of those communities that they have been denied.

The development of advisory and mediation services will be beneficial to resolving ILUAs. They are certainly a burden. The member for Keppel alluded to that earlier. I certainly have had a lot of experience with people dealing with ILUAs. It is a very large impost and usually cost prohibitive. It restricts a lot of development, particularly in northern Australia. Recommendation 11 of the report states—

... that the Queensland Government provides support for mediation services to expedite the development of compensation agreements.

I think that is an excellent way for the state government to be involved. I hope that that is able to be delivered at some time.

In relation to general tenure issues, the committee recommended the introduction of a new type of tenure—a general purpose lease. That is an excellent initiative. There is a very well-known tourism establishment in my electorate that is located on a pastoral lease. For the operators of that establishment to get an ILUA over their property to allow them to continue that tourism activity that employs five or 10 people—I think from memory—is cost prohibitive. The activity just shuts down and everyone loses. So that sort of tenure will open up the doors for those operators to perform that tourism activity on a pastoral lease. That provides tax revenue for the government and it provides jobs. That is a good outcome. So that is an excellent initiative and I commend the government and the committee for it.

My great area of interest in this report relates to pastoral leases. Approximately 70 per cent of Queensland is leasehold. The majority of that is pastoral leases. Recommendation 14 of the report states—

... considers a program of incentives to support lessees wishing to convert from term leases to fee simple.

The member for Pine Rivers went into a lot of detail on this matter. I agree. If we were having this debate 30 or 40 years ago when a lot of these blocks had not been improved as much as they are now, there would be the ability to carve them up and those unused portions would go into a ballot. But I think that ship has sailed because people have improved these places and there is a lot of capital invested. I think it would be a very difficult road to go down in order to try to allow people to enter the industry like they used to. I think with the paradigm we are in now, recommendation 14 is probably the best way to go to provide security of tenure for people.

Recommendation 16 refers to a rental calculation. That is a huge issue. It is very much an antiquated part of the system. I acknowledge that the government is doing work on it. I think it is terrific that this review dealt with that issue. I await with bated breath the outcome of the recommendation. From reading the report I took it that UCVs went up as high as anywhere from 500 per cent to 2,000 per cent. That is a huge burden on people.

I think that the living area policies are a cause of tension and debate among the industry. It is a very interesting topic. Usually, I am against corporations being able to get in and take some of those grazing homestead perpetual leases, because that is the avenue for the small guy to enter the industry. It allows space for them. But then there are difficulties with families wanting to expand on leasehold. So that is a good area for debate.

*(Time expired)*