



Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

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**REGIONAL PLANNING INTERESTS BILL; PROTECTION OF PRIME
AGRICULTURAL LAND AND OTHER LAND FROM COAL SEAM GAS MINING
BILL**

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (9.34 pm): I rise tonight to support the Deputy Premier's Regional Planning Interests Bill 2013. I would like to thank the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning for bringing this common-sense bill before the House. I have the pleasure to again rise in this House to support common-sense legislation that not only supports an industry but supports the four pillars of this great economy that leads to this great state of Queensland. I think it is also pertinent that I note the involvement of the chair, Mr David Gibson, the member for Gympie, and his role in leading the committee and its recommendations in relation to this bill. As the member for Gympie has rightly said in this House, this is a great example of how the committee system should work in terms of the communication and consultation with all of the stakeholders involved in the bill. I would like to thank Mr Gibson for the wonderful speech he just gave to the House.

When the Deputy Premier spoke at great length in the House earlier this evening, he said that the bill enables us to not only compare and contrast the opportunities that the agricultural sector and the resource sector of Queensland now have but also compare and contrast the legislation that a sensible, grown-up government would put before this House as opposed to the legislation that the Katter party put before the House. The Protection of Prime Agricultural Land and Other Land from Coal Seam Gas Mining Bill should basically be named the 'Let's close down the Queensland economy bill', because, honestly, they just want to come into this House and say to the thousands upon thousands of working men and women who contribute to the coal seam gas industry and also the agricultural industry—the mums and dads who stack up that industry—that we are going to shut it all down, that we are going to stop any negotiations and that is it. That would stop the Queensland economy.

We have a brilliant economy and our projections are looking very favourable for our great state, and that is because of a common-sense, grown-up government which introduces bills such as the Regional Planning Interests Bill. We have communicated with the industries and we are getting on with business. As I like to often talk about, this bill also removes a lot of onerous red tape. The LNP government's commitment prior to coming into government was to protect prime agricultural land and restore land use commitments when there is an issue.

One of the most important aspects of the bill that I wish to touch on is the new generational regional plans that address the critical issues affecting regional Queensland. This is especially important in electorates such as mine and the Deputy Premier's where we have the rich red soils of the South Burnett. This area has a heritage of farming, grazing and cropping. Producers in my electorate produce some amazing food, be it peanuts, baked beans, high quality beef, pulses, chicken, fruit, pork, wine, grapes, peanuts, navy beans, fodder and much, much more. But we also mine an amazing coal resource and we can do that in co-existence because this bill brings before the

House—and the Deputy Premier definitely talked about this in his lengthy contribution—the ability for an area such as the South Burnett to have the best of both worlds. And that is why I congratulate the Deputy Premier for this bill.

We have had the situation in the South Burnett before with a resource company where the previous government allowed a UCG plant to be built right smack bang in the middle of prime agricultural land and the rich red soils of the South Burnett. That was not common sense, and under this planning bill that would not be allowed to occur.

Again, I cannot express enough the common sense in this bill that protects great agricultural areas such as the rich red soils of the South Burnett. Where the soils are not so rich and red and where they are not producing fine pulses or other crops, we can have a coalmine that very ably feeds into the electricity market and also produces jobs—amazing jobs—for the constituents of my electorate. This is what this common-sense legislation is all about.

I have been very pleased to be involved in the development of the Darling Downs Regional Plan, the first of the regional plans to be delivered. It takes in areas of my electorate covered by the Toowoomba Regional Council and the Western Downs Regional Council. I am now also very happily involved in the South East Queensland Regional Plan, which covers the Somerset area of my electorate. I am very much looking forward to the Deputy Premier and his department taking on one of the next regional plans, which will take in the South Burnett. My understanding is that that will be the Wide Bay plan. I am very much looking forward to working with the Deputy Premier in relation to that regional plan so I can ensure that these amazing industries, such as agriculture and resources, can continue to work hand in hand and side by side in the great electorate of Nanango.

I think it is important to note that throughout the deliberation on this bill there was wide consultation. There was input from local government, key industry groups and the wider community. As the Deputy Premier has said during the committee process, the overall objective of the bill is for the landholder and a resource proponent to come to an agreement without the need for government protection or intervention. Again, this is common-sense legislation. That is what the landholders want. They want to be on an even footing with the resource company, and so they should be. This is common sense. It is unbelievable that someone from the Katter party can come in here and seriously bring a bill before the House that is going to shut down the Queensland economy without offering an alternative. That is quite astonishing to me.

The agriculture industry in my entire electorate is a major contributor to the Queensland economy. The Darling Downs area is a region that is both internationally and domestically renowned for its productive capacity, high-quality produce and the ability to sustain a strong and diverse agricultural supply chain. It is also interesting to note that we have great companies investing in that exact area such as the Wagners, who are building an amazing airport so that we can get our agricultural products to market and resource companies such as New Hope at Acland can bring in their equipment using that airport. I think this is a wonderful initiative that will support both of those industries for our great state.

There is so much that is positive about the bill that the Deputy Premier has brought before the House and there is so much that is negative about the bill that the Katter party has brought before this House. This bill brought into the House by the Deputy Premier is right and just. As the Deputy Premier so rightfully said, the resource companies must realise this is not a free-for-all, but this bill allows equal footing for both the landholders and the resource companies, as it should. I am proud to be a member of this LNP government. I support this bill before the House.