




Speech By  
**Robbie Katter**

**MEMBER FOR MOUNT ISA**

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### **BIOSECURITY BILL**

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (11.57 am): I rise to speak in support of the Biosecurity Bill 2013. I acknowledge that this is a culmination of some seven years of work. A hell of a lot of work has gone into it and it is very comprehensive and wide ranging. I compliment those people who have contributed to that. It is my understanding that this legislation repeals five acts and amends three others. In bringing all of that together, it is obvious that there will be some benefits and that overall it will provide for the protection of the economy, environment, social amenity and human health that are impacted on by these sorts of issues.

I think the most glaring example in my region was the outbreak of TB, which was an enormous cost to the industry. For many years afterwards people were picking up the pieces trying to deal with that. Events like that can show how big the cost can be if we do not have tight measures for these sorts of issues. Monitoring TB is still a very active part of operations in the Mount Isa electorate. I know that the Normanton rangers are very effective with their biosecurity monitoring. They are constantly dealing with feral pigs, which are big carriers of TB, and doing assessment and analysis of carcasses to try to monitor these sorts of things. It is a very big part of what we do up there, so it is very relevant to our area. I commend this government for continuing the good work on these issues and addressing the shortcomings and making it easier to deal with biosecurity issues.

There was an issue raised that this legislation seemed like an extra regulatory burden, but I also accept that this bill seeks to repeal those other acts and reduce red tape surrounding these sorts of issues. But that was one concern that was raised with us.

Another issue of significance that was raised with us was the cost of implementing some of these things and whether that was going to be borne by local governments. Local governments, in my area in particular, are very stressed at the moment, with conditions being as they are, and some of these things might be difficult to properly maintain. That is something which I draw to the minister's attention as it will need close monitoring.

Another issue addressed by my colleague which I think is significant is the treatment of wild deer under this bill. There seems to be some confusion about whether or not parts of a dead animal are a biosecurity matter. There is no clear provision for parts of a category 3 dead animal to be distributed or disposed of. That is something that I believe needs clarification. There is a threat to taxidermy businesses which are reliant on present hunting activities. This issue has already been raised in this debate, and I think it needs to be addressed. It is an important part of a fairly significant culture and industry in Western Queensland. Putting a market value on wild deer in Queensland and removing it from the category of pest in the bill is the question we put to the minister.

Another issue raised by AgForce in its submission that we felt was of concern was genetically modified crops and the implication in the wording of the bill of what is a carrier and what is a contaminant. That is something that needs some work on. We raise that as a matter of concern in the bill and ask the minister to clarify that in the rolling out of this. Other than that, we are supportive of the bill. We commend the bill to the House and commend the minister for addressing what is a very important issue to industries in Queensland.