




Speech By  
**Deb Frecklington**

**MEMBER FOR NANANGO**

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Record of Proceedings, 10 May 2016

**NATURE CONSERVATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (8.41 pm): I rise to object to the changes proposed in the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. It is important to note that the committee could not agree on whether this bill should be passed and two statements of reservation were received by the deputy chair of the committee, the member for Burnett and the then shadow minister for environment and heritage protection, Mr Stephen Bennett, and the member for Mount Isa, Mr Robbie Katter. I congratulate the member for Burnett not only for the great work he has done over many months in relation to this bill but also in relation to how he has worked with the affected families and landholders. He has done a fantastic job. I also want to congratulate him on his new role as shadow minister for housing. I also congratulate the member for Moggill on his new role as shadow minister for environment and heritage protection. As members could hear from his passion, he is obviously already all over this topic.

Given my previous role as shadow minister for agriculture, fisheries and forestry, I primarily want to speak in relation to clauses 38 and 43 which will revert rolling term leases in national parks back to term leases and which completely remove the rights of current leaseholders to appeal decisions which may cancel their grazing leases. I also want to touch on clause 29 in relation to drought relief grazing provisions. The former LNP government had been working hard to put some common sense into this legislation, but these proposed amendments are changes which affect everyday hardworking primary producers and in some cases will strip away their livelihoods—all in an effort by Labor and the minister opposite to keep his green votes happy. This is yet another attack on our prime agricultural sector. It is plain for all to see—just like the net-free fishing zone regulations introduced by Labor last year—Labor is determined to take jobs away from our regions, it is determined to ruin people's lives and it is determined to make baseless decisions which ultimately uproot families and cause as much angst as possible.

I would like the Labor members sitting opposite to hear about one of those families whose lives will be destroyed by this legislation. The Lohse family live on their grazing property called Springvale near Biggenden. The family has farmed this property for 100 years. Members may remember the story which featured on the front page of *Queensland Country Life* on 18 February. Part of the Lohse's property is a grazing lease. In a move by the then Beattie government, they had to fight for their grazing lease in 2004 and the family ultimately won against that Labor government. However, the new lease was issued as a grazing right on a national park. All their infrastructure is on this lease—their home, their sheds, their cattleyards. The only access they have to the rest of the property is via this leased land. What does this legislation mean to this hardworking family?

**Dr Miles:** Nothing!

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I take that interjection from the minister. He says this takes away nothing. That absolutely goes to the heart of why they do not understand the regions. It is embarrassing, Minister, that you are still trying to justify your—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Farmer): Order! I just want to make sure that members are addressing their comments through the chair on both sides.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Yes, Madam Deputy Speaker. It is just so disappointing that that is the minister's statement whilst we are talking about this family who have not only allowed me to use their last name in this chamber but also allowed me to put on record their distress. As I said, it means the loss of their home. I wonder how members opposite, like the minister, would feel if I said to them that their home was no longer theirs and part of their business was going to be closed down because the government decided to do so. Labor says it is for the purposes of conservation. That is absolute rubbish!

This is not a pristine national park untouched since people arrived on this land; this is land that has been grazed and looked after and managed in a sustainable fashion for more than 100 years. It is a testament to the Lohse family that Labor considers this land so well kept over this period of time that it has now been classified as a national park. This family have looked after this land so well. In fact, they spend about \$100,000 a year caring for this leasehold land so that it can be deemed to be a national park. It is ironic: they do this work and then it all gets taken away under the guise that what this family is doing is destroying it. It just does not make sense. This family have stated that they spend this money to control weeds, feral animals and fire because it is mountainous terrain. There has been no government assistance this whole time. Sharon Lohse said—

All our management revolves around our knowledge of the land and flora and fauna on Springvale. We have extensive fauna lists and flora, and have had specialists in over the years working with them. The biodiversity is of high value because of our commitment to conservation and knowledge of our land. Our cattle assist in this conservation.

I need to acknowledge the member for Gympie because these good people that I am talking about are the member for Gympie's wonderful constituents. These changes not only affect that good family; they affect many other leaseholders. Two have already felt the effects of these proposed changes, and the legislation has not even passed through this House yet! Two farming families have been told by the department that their leases are finished, with 12 months to vacate. This is the Mayne family near Springsure and the Day family near Kilkivan, and I am sure the member for Gympie will be discussing this issue further.

**Dr Miles** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I wonder whether the minister even knows where Springsure and Kilkivan are. What we have here is the Labor Party implementing its green promises before it even has a legitimate right to. When Teresa Day sat before the committee to tell her story, she was so emotional she had to hand it over to her husband. The Days have been farming this land for over 140 years. On the Mayne's property they are a certified organic operation following the Global Animal Partnership's sustainable code of practice. Both families manage the feral pests and weeds at no cost to taxpayers.

Just like this Labor government is taking the axe to farmers through its ridiculous native vegetation laws, it does not appear to get it that farmers, just like these farming families about whom I have spoken, can be conservationists. I would be interested to know how much this Palaszczuk Labor government has planned to set aside in its upcoming budget to manage this land. Who will do the managing when the farmers are gone? How many extra people is the government going to hire to manage this land to keep it in the state that it is in? I doubt that this minister has thought that far ahead. All the members opposite can think of is evicting these good tenants so that the land can be locked up and forgotten so that the urban greenies can feel good about themselves. We have to get real. This is simply not good legislation. This is the green agenda that is punishing and demonising our primary producers.

I will leave members with a different picture. Our primary producers are hardworking, honest people. Our primary producers are the people who put food on our table. When the members opposite tuck into their next steak and think about how good it is, I ask them to spare a thought for those farming families who have put that beef on their plate for them—farmers who care for their animals and who care for the environment. We need to give farmers a fair go. We need to give them the right to get on with what they do best for the rest of us, which is farming, rather than constantly hitting them with legislation that challenges their rights and their businesses.

Many members opposite may not realise it, but Queensland is experiencing one of the worst droughts on record. Yet they say that this type of legislation should continue to attack our graziers. It is so sad that I have to stand in this House to justify to those opposite how detrimental this legislation will be. I am embarrassed to even have to stand in this House to try to explain that.