




Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

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**WATER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL; ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
(UNDERGROUND WATER MANAGEMENT) AND OTHER LEGISLATION
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (8.05 pm): The Palaszczuk Labor government is no friend of rural and regional Queensland. This bill is a prime example of their hypocrisy. They say that they care about economic development in the regions on one hand, but on the other hand we see Minister Lynham, the Minister for Mines, bringing in amendments that will wreck a community and that will take away tens of thousands of jobs in Queensland. It also risks thousands of jobs that are already existing. It is interesting—I will not be able to make comment because the minister has just left the chamber. However, it is no secret that—

Ms Boyd interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Maybe the member for Pine Rivers would like to depart as well. It is no secret that I 100 per cent support primary producers out there who find themselves working with resource companies. It is only the LNP that support make-good arrangements which fully protect landholder rights in respect of underground water. I agree with AgForce that primary producers must have up-front certainty that their access to water will be secure and will not be interrupted or impaired by mining or gas sector activities. The LNP acknowledges there are some concerns with the current make-good arrangements, but it must be noted that Labor has failed to undertake a comprehensive review of these arrangements. We urge the Palaszczuk Labor government to properly review the make-good arrangements, like the LNP did in 2013 with our land access implementation committee. These reforms are important and we need to see a proper review of make-good provisions for this legislation.

The LNP opposition have a strong commitment to appropriately protecting the interests of landholders and regional communities. It was the LNP who strengthened the make-good provisions. Prior to the LNP coming into government the previous Labor government supported make-good provisions for only petroleum and gas. We extended it to all landholders, in particular in relation to coal. In this respect I highlight that amendments to this bill that have been proposed by Minister Lynham have direct impacts on two major projects in our state. We see the expanded revised stage 3 of the New Hope mine that has been talked about here tonight. This project needs some clarification for this House because there are those opposite who are just deluded in their belief in relation to this. The approval process for the new Acland coalmine stage 3 started in April 2007. It has been a—

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask the members for Logan and Gregory if you would like to have a conversation you are welcome to take it outside the chamber, but we are here to debate a bill tonight.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Since April 2007 it has been a long, exhaustive process to get to where we are. There was public consultation on the draft terms of reference for the EIS in 2007. The original EIS was released for public consultation in 2009.

The project languished under the then Beattie-Bligh Labor governments. The scope of the project was revised to take into account community concerns that were given through feedback in 2012. A revised draft terms of reference was taken on board by the LNP government, and the terms of reference for the EIS were released from 1 December 2012 to 4 February 2013. The EIS was then released for public consultation from January 2014 to March 2014. The additional information for the EIS was then released further in 2014. Finally, listening to what the community had requested, the Coordinator-General approved the project with extremely strict conditions in 2014. They worked with the community to address concerns about that project. New Hope then submitted applications for an environmental authority amendment and a mining lease. Both applications have been subject to community consultation. That is no less than seven public consultation processes for state based approvals about the project and its potential impacts. The Palaszczuk government even commissioned Synergy Economics to undertake a cost-benefit analysis on the New Acland project which found the project would yield a positive net present value of \$1.68 billion.

In short, it is unbelievable that this minister comes into this House tonight after all of this time and after all of the public consultation—seeing 700 workers out there pleading with the Minister for Environment and the Minister for Mines to listen to their plight. With the amendments that this minister has brought into the House tonight he has thrown this project under the bus. Why do they hate the Darling Downs and the hardworking workers there? The simple fact is he has traded Peter to pay Paul. It is incredible that this minister, who goes up to Toowoomba and around the Darling Downs region and makes friends with them all and tries to pretend that he is listening, tonight goes out there and throws those good people under the bus.

Since this bill was first introduced I have received hundreds of emails from New Hope workers and contractors expressing their concern. There are too many to read, but first Matthew and Naomi Tonschenk, who were standing out there pleading for this minister to go. They both work at the Acland mine and Matthew has been employed there for 14 years. They wrote—

Our family and surrounding community have been exposed to 9 years of delays and changes. This legislation could further delay the approval of the Acland Coal Mine expansion and seriously jeopardise my future, my families future and the financial future of this area. We are pleading with you to make the right decision.

We also have David Wood, 'Woody', who works at the mine who says—

... 507 contractors and 2300 indirect jobs will be lost if the mine expansion is not approved.

They go on and on, Madam Deputy Speaker. It is interesting to note that those ministers over there have only met with the CFMEU; they will not meet with the workers of New Hope. After that protest I received a call from Coral and Barry Mason. The Masons are third-generation farmers whose property borders this project. They wanted to express their support for my statements because they want to see the revised stage 3 go ahead. They understand the community consultation, and they understand the amendments that we made to this proposal to satisfy that community. They believe that mining and farming can work together. They believe agriculture in the region will suffer if the expansion does not go ahead because many of the workers have farms and work at the mine to subsidise their income. Barry Mason said—

I like to sleep at night, and I can't sleep knowing that if the mine doesn't go ahead and I say nothing, the situation is there will be people will be out of work.

I would like to thank Coral and Barry Mason for speaking out. I would like to thank every one of my constituents who understand the real economic, financial and agricultural impact that this minister is landing on their lap right now.

I would like to endorse the well-thought-out amendments that the honourable member for Hinchinbrook has brought forward to enable the project to go ahead. It has been through EIS, community consultation, Land Court applications and pleading from 700 decent locals of the Nanango electorate who are pleading with this government to listen to them because they know that the Palaszczuk Labor government does not care about agriculture. The Palaszczuk Labor government does not care about the regions. They are all talk and no action.