




Speech By
Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR DALRYMPLE

Record of Proceedings, 17 March 2016

**VEGETATION MANAGEMENT (REINSTATEMENT) AND OTHER LEGISLATION
AMENDMENT BILL, REPORTING DATE**

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (9.54 pm): This is a bad day and a bad bill. It is disappointing that a motion has been moved in this House to fast-track this bad bill through the committee system. I oppose the motion to fast-track the referral of the bill. I support the amendment to the motion, moved by the opposition, to change the reporting date to 30 June.

This issue has been going on since time began. Vegetation management is a political football that has been bouncing backwards and forwards. Landowners want certainty. They are sick and tired of this political football. The Bligh government was booted out because of two reasons: its asset sales agenda and its attack on landowners. The situation had reached the point where landowners were so sick and tired of the Labor Party's oppression in regard to vegetation management reforms that they stormed the then premier's office in Townsville. They were prepared to be prosecuted because they were sick of the tree police, the water police, the dob-in-a-farmer hotlines, the spy-in-the-sky satellites.

I commend the member for Callide because, back in 2004 when the vegetation management changes were introduced by the Beattie government, for two days he fought that legislation clause by clause. He never gave up on landowners. That is because primary producers are out there to do one thing and that is to produce a product, to put food on the table. When we go to our restaurants, we are eating that food, we are eating that good beef, we are eating that good vegetable.

These are Queensland's own producers, but they have been attacked by their own government. What is their crime? To be able to support Queensland, to produce a product. We know that we have a \$14 billion primary industry that led us through the global economic crisis. But it is very difficult for landowners when they have all of these restrictions, all of these regulations—all of these dob-in-a-farmer hotlines and the spy-in-the-sky satellites.

I commend the LNP in regard to reversing the onus of proof to ensure that people could clear for primary agricultural land. I absolutely commend the LNP for that. This bill has been introduced because of politics. Land management is about sowing the good seed, producing the good crops and producing the good food on the table. When we see those trees cleared, there is the comment, 'Look at what the bulldozers have done. Look at how they've left it. We are seeing the ozone layer depleted and global warming and everything that goes with that.' But those images do not show the sorghum, they do not show the rhodes grass, they do not show the cattle that have been fattened and they do not show the benefits that we are receiving throughout Queensland.

This is bad legislation that has been brought to the House. We are in the Legislative Assembly to ensure that we stop bad legislation. Cape York Peninsula is crying out for development. Ninety-nine per cent is remnant—

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Dalrymple, I urge you to make your comments relevant to the amendment before the House, please.

Mr KNUTH: This bill has been fast-tracked. I am speaking passionately in support of the LNP's amendment to the motion to stop the bill from being fast-tracked because of all of those significant reasons that I have mentioned. I know that every grazier in Queensland is watching us right now hoping that they have somebody to stand up for them.

I am sick and tired of seeing governments working against businesspeople and our producers. I totally agree that we need a process, but at the same time what we are seeing here is very bad legislation that is being fast-tracked. I support the motion that has been moved by the Leader of Opposition Business. I want to see this bill vehemently opposed by whatever means necessary because this is bad medicine for the state.