



Speech By  
**Hon. Dr Steven Miles**  
**MEMBER FOR MOUNT COOT-THA**

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Record of Proceedings, 17 March 2016

**MOTION: NORTH STRADBROKE ISLAND PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABILITY  
LEGISLATION**

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (6.05 pm): I move the following amendment—

That all words after 'amended' be deleted and the following words inserted:

'to 3 May 2016'.

I rise to speak against the motion and in favour of the much more reasonable amendment I have just moved. Tonight marks another embarrassing chapter in the LNP's record when it comes to North Stradbroke Island. Over the last 12 months I have spoken to so many Straddie businesses, locals, workers and traditional owners and they have said to me one thing. What they say to me they want is certainty and a plan.

They say the years since the LNP legislated the mine extension—since the LNP delivered to their election supporter a mine extension even longer than they were asking for—have left them in limbo and not knowing what their future holds. More recently they have begun to express relief that certainty is finally in sight. Tonight, in a cruel twist of the knife, the LNP tries to drag this out for another six months.

They do this with no reflection at all on the obvious contradiction. Those opposite oppose our economic transition plan because they say there is not enough time for the transition. Then tonight they move to reduce the time by six more months. After setting the transition back three years with their outrageous actions in government, now from opposition they try to cut another six months from the transition time frame. It is nothing short of cruel.

The people of Straddie want certainty and a plan. The government does not object to the committee considering the economic transition plan. It is a good plan and it is intrinsically linked to the bill currently before the committee. Therefore we support the elements of the motion that ask the committee to consider the plan. In doing so, we note that the committee has had extensive access to officials who are leading the economic transition strategy. They have been present at committee hearings and have taken questions freely from committee members. The committee is already familiar with the plan. They do not need half a year to look at it, consult and include it in their report. The time frame we have proposed is much more reasonable.

I can indicate for the chamber that the government would have preferred for this motion to be amended for the committee to report back in April. Following discussion and consultation with the mover of the substantive private member's bill, the member for Dalrymple, the government now seeks to amend the motion to report back on 3 May. I thank the member for Dalrymple for his consideration and compromise on this amendment. I was pleased that the government was able to work cooperatively on this important issue.

I acknowledge that this amended return date gives the committee time to consider further submissions while not delaying the final consideration of the bill. The economic transition strategy will make North Stradbroke Island Australia's most desirable island community. It will open Straddie up for all Queenslanders to enjoy and it will deliver sustainable jobs that will be there long after mining ends.

Through the draft economic transition strategy the government will invest \$23.87 million—nearly \$24 million—to deliver up to 151 direct and ongoing jobs. The strategy is also delivering a further \$40 million in private sector and stakeholder co-investment. As a direct result of discussions with affected workers in their unions, we have also allocated \$5 million to a workers assistance package to directly help them to transition. This draft plan is a good plan. It will deliver sustainable jobs and look after the affected workers. For that reason, we welcome the committee considering it in conjunction with the bill. What we do not welcome, and what we will not stand for, is this cruel attempt to drag it out until September.

North Stradbroke Island, Minjerrabah, is a special place. It is special to all Queenslanders. It deserves certainty and a plan. This motion from the member for Hinchinbrook is designed to ruin both.