




Speech By  
**Verity Barton**

**MEMBER FOR BROADWATER**

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**VEGETATION MANAGEMENT (REINSTATEMENT) AND OTHER LEGISLATION  
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (9.22 pm): I rise this evening to make a brief contribution to the debate on the vegetation management proposals. At the outset I acknowledge the great work that the member for Hinchinbrook has done on this issue. Everyone on this side of the House knows just how hard the member for Hinchinbrook has worked with members of our team to travel the length and breadth of Queensland to ensure that landholders across this great state have an opportunity to understand what the government has been proposing and have an opportunity to be heard. I am sure that everyone would acknowledge the contribution that he made to this debate last night when he very eloquently set out exactly why it is that this legislation must tonight be opposed.

I oppose this legislation because as a member of the LNP I believe in the inalienable rights and freedoms that are associated with the ownership of property. When I was 16 I joined the Young Liberals because I believed in the freedom of the individual and protecting the rights of private property. I have been incredibly proud to be a member of the former Liberal Party and now the LNP over those years so that I can stand up against big government, against the abrogation of property rights. I am very proud to again rise in this House tonight and stand up for true conservative values that have been represented by the LNP and its predecessor parties for years and years and years.

Ronald Reagan once said that the nine scariest words in the English language are, 'I'm from the government and I'm here to help.' Landholders across Queensland are shivering in their boots at the thought of this Deputy Premier offering to help them manage their land. The thought of the Labor Party in Queensland having any idea about how landholders in this state should manage their land is just ridiculous. We know that farmers are some of the greatest conservationists that we will ever see. The land is their livelihood. They are of the land and for the land. For the government in this state to say to them that they have no idea how on earth they should manage their land is an absolute slap in the face to one of the economic powerhouses of this state. As members on this side of the House have said, any attempt by this government to dictate to landholders what they can and cannot do with land that they own will have significant ramifications for the production of agriculture in this state. It will also have a significant impact on jobs.

Time and time again we have seen the government stand up in this House and say that they believe in consultation. I think that demonstrably, by the way they have handled this issue and the way that they sought to truncate the committee's consideration of these very serious and significant issues, that is all hyperbole. Hypocrisy, thy name is Labor. We know that it is the LNP in this state that wants to give landholders a voice. It is people like the member for Hinchinbrook, the member for Nanango, the member for Gregory, the member for Warrego, and all 42 members of the LNP team, who genuinely believe in giving landholders an opportunity not only to have their say but also to manage their land as they know best rather than be dictated to by bureaucrats and boffins in George Street. We know that

the people who are able to best understand what happens and what is right for the land is the people who live on it.

There are a number of serious issues that have been canvassed by my colleagues in this debate with respect to retrospectivity and the reversal of the onus of proof and I do not intend to canvass those tonight, but what I will say is can you imagine if the LNP were in government and stood up in this House and said that we will reverse the onus of proof, that we believe that legislation should be retrospective? The Deputy Premier would be the first person on her feet crying foul, saying that we are breaching fundamental legislative principles and we are abrogating the rights and freedoms of individuals in this House. Again what we see is hyperbole and hypocrisy emanating from the mouths of this government.

I will finish with just one final quote. Edmund Burke said that the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing. What we have seen tonight in this House is 45 members say that they will not let evil triumph, that they will stand up for the rights and freedoms of individuals, that they will stand up for the rights of property owners and they will respect the supremacy of private property. I condemn the legislation that is before the House and I look forward to joining my LNP colleagues in standing up against this big government abrogation of property rights.