




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR TRAEGER

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**REVENUE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL; APPROPRIATION
(PARLIAMENT) BILL (NO. 2); AND APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 2)**

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (5.30 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate of the Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. I refer to the clause that addresses the restriction on the sale of yeast in communities. I will talk about Mornington Island, which a few people have mentioned. I say at the outset that this is a good move and is welcome but it goes nowhere near far enough. It is very frustrating to see this issue come up. I am gratified to see some movement on it finally. I have been the member representing that area almost seven years. In my first or second year I visited Mornington Island with the then minister, the former member for Noosa. Subsequently I have visited with one or two other ministers. I believe there have been at least five visits from ministers in the time I have been the member. Every time they hear the same message of frustration. The community wants to move forward. There is always talk of reviewing the AMP. It was a bit difficult at the start because there was still pushback from the QPS. They said, 'We don't know what the community wants.' For 12 months we have known what the community wants. We have the QPS, the hospital and health service and everyone else on board. Everyone wants it. It is there to change now. We welcome this, but we desperately need to move towards management plans, because that is what is needed to really make a difference there.

We have heard a lot about the effects of the alcohol management plan. It was all done with the best of intentions. I think the reports were that crime levels and rates of violence went down initially, but inadvertently it has caused the rise of drugs and home-brew, which is why we are addressing the issue of yeast in this bill.

Alcohol is a really big issue in that community, as I am sure it is in many other places. If you throw into the mix other issues, such as blue cards, it creates a deadly cocktail resulting in social outcomes that we are experiencing and battling up there. I could not say in stronger terms that this issue desperately needs attention and another review or talkfest with the community. It has been done to death. They just want some action on alcohol management plans so that someone up there can have a beer.

In discussions about blue cards for people in those communities people have said to me, 'Do you want different laws for people up there than for everywhere else?' I have said that we already have that with alcohol management, because you are not allowed to drink up there. There is a plan. One plan was for a canteen; the other plan was for a local, individual licence to purchase alcohol which focused back on the individual. They have landed on the canteen. That needs to go back into the community to address the rise of home-brew. I have heard stories that there has been up to 60 per cent ethanol in some of those concoctions. That would be lethal. It is a ticking time bomb ready to explode.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr KATTER: I take that interjection, that you cannot distil to 60 per cent. The member should talk to the QPS officers up there. That is the report they get. They are worried about it. If you want to play down the issue—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! The member for Traeger will speak through the chair. The member for Logan will cease interjecting.

Mr KATTER: It is a very serious issue that we have to address. The alcohol management plans need to be reviewed. It needs the leadership of the government to do that. They are doing their work at the base but they need to expand on that.

An issue that I must admit crept up on us—we have not had good engagement with various stakeholders—is the first claim issue that was spoken about at length. The KAP is very concerned about this. There are often some—I would not go so far as to say ‘devious’—poor outcomes when there is argy-bargy around claims and people moving in from other areas who have not been there for a long time and making decisions. Parts of the community are excluded from the decision-making process, and this often results in what I would see as a very poor outcome overall for the community. We express very serious concerns about that part of the legislation. I regret that we did not have more time or resources to engage stakeholders on that.

I implore the House and the Deputy Premier to address alcohol management plans. They must be reviewed and changed for Mornington Island so that the community can start to move forward. Just as important as the issues of title deeds and blue cards is the issue of alcohol management plans. We welcome the restriction on sale of turbo yeast, but that falls hopelessly short of what can be done by this government and what has been talked about for at least five years in this House. I could outline the number of questions I have asked, letters I have sent and meetings I have had. It is very frustrating that we still have not seen any action. It is very disappointing indeed, when compared to other issues that have been dealt with expeditiously by the House because people’s lives are at risk.

I challenge anyone to find a more widespread, insidious and acute health problem affecting communities across Queensland. I cannot help but think that Mornington Island’s geographical position—it is nudging 3,000 kilometres away from where we are right now—has something to do with the fact that the issue has not been addressed. There have been visits but no action. Action needs to happen. The problem is becoming more and more serious. As I said, the QPS and the health services are saying that this is a ticking time bomb, putting people’s lives at risk.