



Speech By  
**Shane Knuth**


**MEMBER FOR HILL**

---

Record of Proceedings, 14 November 2018

## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **Agriculture Industry**

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (7.23 pm): I wish to raise the continual destructive and senseless attacks on the Queensland agriculture industry. The recent cut to the School to Industry Partnership Program—which educated Queensland children on the importance of agriculture in this state and where their food comes from—is just the latest in this government’s sustained attack on the state’s agricultural industry. Refusal to apply common-sense policies to write down the cost of electricity assets and infrastructure, inequities in electricity pricing tariffs, the failure to build dams and water distribution infrastructure, the cutting of funding to the river trusts and unsustainable vegetation management laws are strangling an industry that already has to fight weather and market conditions.

The cancellation of funding for the School to Industry Partnership Program will mean future policymakers will grow up without knowing the importance of our agricultural industry to our economy and our quality of life. After 15 years of hearing debate in this House on what is best for our farmers, I am almost certain that many members past and present do not realise that food is not grown on the shelves of Woolies and Coles. This ignorance leads the government to treat our farmers like the enemy and restrict their ability to practise sustainable land care through unworkable vegetation management laws.

Our primary producers are the ones with the experience and knowledge to create the best strategies for vegetation management, not government. On top of funding cuts, there are measures the government refuse to take to cut down energy costs. There are solutions available that would fix regional electricity prices tomorrow: write down the infrastructure valuation, fix the inequities built into regional tariffs and stop applying south-east network costs to the Ergon system.

There is no point blaming the weather for the suffering of our agricultural industry at the moment. Both major parties have failed to deliver outcomes and fulfil their responsibility to facilitate the growth and prosperity of farming in this state. State governments have done nothing in the last 30 years regarding water infrastructure, except spend millions on feasibility studies while our farmers continue to suffer from drought because there are no new dams or irrigation schemes. These endless studies clearly show that we would be in a much better position if one more dam had been constructed in the last 10 years. This is not a weather problem; it is a policy problem. It is wilful ignorance of the value and necessity of our agricultural industry.

It is senseless, crippling legislation, false election promises and a lack of political will to back up the lip-service by both major parties to the agricultural and primary industries in this state. It is imperative that we change the direction and start to acknowledge, not just with words but with action, that our agricultural industry is here to stay, that we support our farmers and that we value them as the backbone of our economy, food source and way of life.