




Speech By  
**Brent Mickelberg**

**MEMBER FOR BUDERIM**

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**VEGETATION MANAGEMENT (CLEARING FOR RELEVANT PURPOSES)  
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (6.11 pm): I rise to speak on the Vegetation Management (Clearing for Relevant Purposes) Amendment Bill 2018. I note at the outset that the LNP will not be opposing this bill, which seeks to improve government transparency and accountability of Labor's unfair vegetation management laws—vegetation management legislation based on ideology rather than science, that relies on incomplete and inaccurate information and that stops farmers and graziers from sustainably managing their land.

It is clear that Labor want to demonise farmers for their own selfish political benefit. Because of Labor's flawed vegetation management laws, graziers are restricted in their ability to harvest fodder to supplement drought-affected stock. We have heard plenty of gnashing of teeth from the Minister for Natural Resources and his choir opposite. They do not like to hear it, but it is true. As a consequence, Queenslanders everywhere are paying more for locally grown food.

The LNP acknowledges that legislation is required to ensure that land clearing is performed in a properly regulated manner, and we are committed to environmental protections, but this Labor government's legislation was a bridge too far and it is bringing our rural communities to their knees. What is required is sensible legislation that is informed by accurate and complete scientific data, rather than the incomplete and flawed SLATS data that this government relied on to justify their assault on farmers and graziers last year.

This amendment bill is a commonsense proposal that seeks to create an obligation on the chief executive to issue an information notice where an application for clearing, as assessed under section 22A of the act, has been rejected. It is a small first step and it makes sense. As it stands now, there is no right of appeal or review for a person when their application under section 22A is rejected. Perhaps this was the objective of the government when they introduced their rushed vegetation management amendment bill last year. If it is good enough to appeal a traffic infringement, surely it is reasonable that farmers and graziers have a right to appeal in relation to a decision that affects their very livelihood.

The government's entire approach in relation to farmers, graziers and the bush has been divisive and disingenuous. We saw the incompetent minister for agriculture sit silently on the issue of greatest concern to the very industries that he supposedly represents in the form of this government's draconian vegetation management legislation. He was missing in action at the public hearings in Gracemere, Townsville, Cloncurry, Longreach, Charleville, Cairns and Brisbane, and he was missing in action when thousands of farmers and graziers rallied on the doorsteps of this place to ensure their voice was heard.

**Ms Pease** interjected.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** Okay, boomer. Perhaps if those opposite had taken the time to listen during the public consultation—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Whiting): Address your comments through the chair, please, member for Buderim.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** Sorry, Mr Deputy Speaker. Perhaps if those opposite had taken the time to listen during the sham public consultation last year—

**Ms PEASE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at the statement by the member for Buderim.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Buderim, would you like to withdraw and continue?

**Mr MICKELBERG:** I withdraw. As I was saying, perhaps if those opposite had taken the time to listen during the sham public consultation last year we would not be here today remediating some of the many failures of Labor's politically motivated vegetation management legislation. Such a sentiment is probably wishful thinking, given that not a single tangible recommendation from the committee was accepted in relation to the previous bill, and the rights of farmers and graziers were traded for Greens votes in Brisbane. Queenslanders deserve better.

Stakeholder feedback in relation to the proposed amendment bill is broadly supportive of the provisions contained in amendment 3. Both the LGAQ and AgForce were supportive of the provisions, which provide greater accountability and transparency around departmental decision-making.

In conclusion, I urge the Labor government to support this sensible proposal. It will provide greater transparency in relation to departmental decision-making on this important issue and will go some of the way to restoring faith in the bush.