



Speech By  
**David Crisafulli**


**MEMBER FOR BROADWATER**

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Record of Proceedings, 22 October 2019

## **RECREATION AREAS MANAGEMENT (FEES) AMENDMENT REGULATION**

### **Disallowance of Statutory Instrument**

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (5.29 pm): I move—

That the Recreation Areas Management (Fees) Amendment Regulation 2019, subordinate legislation No. 197 of 2019, tabled in the House on 15 October 2019, be disallowed.

'I believe this is a poor decision that goes against trying to attract more tourism to Straddie.' Those are not the words of the member for Oodgeroo, a great champion for that part of the world. They are not the words of the member for Clayfield, who has been a frequent visitor there for many years, and both of those gentlemen will articulate why this tax is so terrible. They are the words of the member for Capalaba, and they are true words because it is a poor decision. It is a poor decision because Straddie is hurting, and I know that because I have been over there with the member for Oodgeroo on several occasions. We have sat down and had fish and chips and spoken with business owners and talked to locals. We know that because we have spoken with the Straddie Chamber of Commerce—a great, dynamic organisation on the island that is reflecting the views of its members and which for some strange reason was left off the strategic planning committee and therefore the voice of business was kicked off that committee. This is about trying to energise an island at a time when it is doing it tough, yet the chamber of commerce was kicked off the group tasked with trying to get it going.

It is a poor decision because the transition from sandmining is in tatters. For three years the government has spoken about 23 projects that were designed to get the island's economy going and just two of the smaller ones have been completed. During estimates we revealed that of the \$5 million fund that was to be distributed to workers just 10 per cent has been distributed. Regardless of one's views on sandmining and the transition—and the views are varied because there were people who wanted it ended immediately, there were people who never wanted to see it end and there were people who chose different points in time—a decision was taken and a transition strategy was put in place and the government has taken its eye off the ball.

It was a poor decision because the consultation has been non-existent. People woke up to news that within a month the government would triple the fees for people to be able to go over and enjoy what they have done for generations and those businesses that have relied on that army—that influx—to put some money through the tills to help in those soft periods. To wake up and find out that those fees have been trebled, is it little wonder why the member for Capalaba was so vehement in his criticism! There is good news: the member for Capalaba will be speaking to this motion today and that will be his opportunity, because the member for Capalaba roars in the Redlands but he whispers in William Street. Today is his day to stand up and say things like, 'Mr Deputy Speaker, this is a poor decision that goes against trying to attract more tourism to Straddie and, as a result, I will be voting in favour of the disallowance motion because I am going to put my community ahead of my political allegiance,' and we will be waiting—

**Mr Bailey** interjected.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I take the interjection from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, who said it would be the first—and indeed it would!

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Whiting): Order! Pause a moment. Put your comments through the chair please.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** It would be a poor decision because I ask those opposite: what benefit could possibly be derived from increasing these fees threefold? Those opposite will say that money will be collected and will be reinvested, but, as the member for Oodgeroo will explain, the issue is not the collection of money; the issue has been spending that money.

There has been a pile of money put aside for a transition strategy and just two of the 23 projects have been delivered. Money is available. What is missing is the will of the government to see this through. To wake up and suggest that the only way to deliver for an island is to tax the very people who are going over to try and underpin that economy shows either complete and utter flawed logic or is there a hidden reason as to why this is occurring? Is there some sort of secret plan that is being hatched that really the government does not want people going to Straddie?

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I welcome the giggles because, on any fair analysis, there is no reason and there is no benefit to increasing a fee by three times. It is not a case of money that needs to be found to be delivered. The quantum of money is there. It is not a case that the island's community has been crying for this. What did the consultation look like? Business did not know. Business woke up and read about it in the paper. Council did not know, and the mayor, to her great credit, has stood up and said that the decision shows a lack of understanding of the island. Again, those opposite will criticise people in local government for standing up for their community. I am sorry, but, if the member for Stafford does not believe the mayor's responsibility is to stand up and call out bad policy, I would suggest to him that he does not know a lot about local government.

What did consultation look like? Were the four-wheel drive clubs brought into the picture? No. They also read about it in the paper. What about the residents? What about the long-suffering residents who have been part of some sort of political football, who have been tossed from one side to another, who have been at the whim of groups being given bits of funding here and bits of funding there but no overarching proper strategy and no time line on the delivery of these projects? What about those residents who just want to see two things: they want to see an island where the look and the feel and the culture remains as it is, but they want a job for their kids. They do not want their kids to have to pack a lunch box and head off every day and they certainly do not want their kids to have to leave the island to be able to find employment.

The government promised us rivers of gold as part of the economic transition. We were told about ecotourism jobs. In fact, the current tourism minister, then in a different portfolio, told us about these hundreds of jobs that would be coming over the hill. I believe it was 400 jobs in ecotourism, and that was predicted 10 years ago.

Today the minister can explain how many of those 400 jobs have been delivered. If the minister does not, the local member will, because in this local member that community has found somebody who has risen above the hurly-burly of the deadline of sandmining. The member for Oodgeroo has made the decision and said, 'I might not agree with the time line, but I will do what is right by my community.' He has secured an extra \$11 million for the economic transition strategy, but still the money sits there. Through the local press he has continued to call for those projects that the community is crying out for. He has continued to engage with organisations such as the chamber, such as the traditional owners, and they are all looking for one thing, and that is an island that has an economy, a hope and a future. That is not too much to ask.

If it is not some sort of secret deal, if it is not some sort of lack of understanding, why will the government not swallow its pride and support this disallowance motion? Why do we need another new or increased tax? Why is it that every time this Treasurer and this government hands down a budget we wake to news of another tax on families? The government says that its taxes do not affect mums and dads. We are seeing that play out right before us at the moment with the waste levy. Businesses are passing on the cost and the government is not reinvesting the bulk of that money into environmental initiatives. Almost nine cents in every 10 cents—almost 90 per cent—of that levy is going back to the government in some way, shape or form. Here we have another tax.

For all of the commitments that the Leader of the Opposition has made, for all of the pledges, for all of the vision about making sure that our kids are cool, about making sure that people can get on and about delivering jobs across the economy and certainty for the mining industry, the best commitment

that has been made is no new taxes from 2020. The Queensland that I want my kids to grow up in is a Queensland where people can invest with certainty, where people can know that their household budget can be upheld without there being a constant attack on the bottom line.

This increase might be only small when we compare it to the \$1.2 billion from the waste tax, but it means a lot to families. It means a lot to the mum and dad who will throw their kids in the car and head over for an experience that those children will remember. I say to the member for Capalaba and, indeed, to the member for Redlands and the member for Springwood that this is their opportunity to show that that island's economy is very fragile. It is a special part of the world that people love to call home. It is a part of the world where people love to go and have an experience.

This tax will hurt. If the member for Capalaba stands up today and tries to say that somehow he has garnered a commitment from a minister to spend rivers of gold on the island, I say that that is not what they want. The money has been set aside. People want the member for Capalaba to work with the member for Oodgeroo to deliver on the projects that have been outlined, to get the chamber of commerce back to the table and to axe the Straddie tax, because it is not good policy. It is not fair policy. It is not needed.

The consultation was a sham. Business did not know about the increase. The council was blindsided by it. For the member, in an unguarded moment, to stand up for his community and then come into this House and backtrack, that will haunt him for a long time. The member's constituents know how very special North Stradbroke Island is. If the member truly believes that this increase is a poor decision, I urge him to support this disallowance motion. If the member truly believes that this increase is a poor decision for lifestyle, if he truly believes that it is a poor decision for the economy and if he truly believes that it is a poor decision because of a lack of consultation, this is his opportunity to support a motion of substance and a motion of fairness. If the member for Capalaba chooses not to, I sense that, in 12 months time, there will be a decision made by his community to that effect.