




Speech By
Mark Robinson

MEMBER FOR OODGEROO

Record of Proceedings, 22 October 2019

RECREATION AREAS MANAGEMENT (FEES) AMENDMENT REGULATION

Disallowance of Statutory Instrument

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (5.51 pm): Labor's secret Straddie tax proves that you cannot trust Labor and you cannot afford Labor. The long-suffering residents of North Stradbroke Island also know this. The latest kick to the residents is Labor's tripling of the four-wheel drive beach access fee, or Straddie tax. Sadly, Deputy Premier Jackie Trad has thrown over 300 workers out of work in recent years because of Labor's opposition to Queensland's resources sector, but now she is crueLLing the island's last remaining economic lifeline—its tourism industry—through this tax.

For generations families have flocked to North Stradbroke Island because it has been affordable. Tradies in their Toyotas and Tritons could have an affordable camping holiday with the kids, enjoying Straddie's pristine wilderness beaches. Labor has long abandoned working people for the kale munchers of their Extinction Rebellion allies in the hipster coffee shops of West End. Locals and tourists alike have let my office know what they really think.

In a short period of time more than 900 people have signed my petition against Labor's secret Straddie tax. One person estimated it will cost their family \$600 by the time they pay the ferry fee and the beach access tax for their four-wheel drive and camper trailer, and that is before they pay camping fees or pick up supplies from local island businesses. Clearly this is one of many families who will now struggle, from 1 November, if this tax goes ahead, to come back to the island. However, in a show of admirable restraint this person on Facebook refrained from punctuating their comments with swearing emojis. Yes, the emojis have made a comeback.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Order! May I caution the member. Please stick to the item at hand, thank you. Let us not go down that path.

Dr ROBINSON: A prominent business person said, 'Small businesses feel like Labor is deliberately attacking them.' They feel like there is a vendetta against them and their ability to make their own living. It hurts locals who need beach access to get to their favourite fishing spots all year round. It hurts loyal tourists who fish all year round and recreate on the island. These people are the baseline customers of island businesses. Labor's tax hike is a wilful vandalism of the island's marketing strategy, a strategy built around encouraging people to come back year in, year out as a family tradition.

Straddie Kingfisher Tours owner, David Thelander, said people who had been visiting the island for 20 years told him this would be the last year they would visit because of these increasing costs. This is tragic. Instead of consulting about impacts, Labor developed the Straddie tax in secret. They blindsided everyone: local businesses, the community, most of the Quandamooka people, the council and even their own members of parliament. Redlands mayor Karen Williams said the decision was symptomatic of the government not understanding the need to engage with the Straddie community. I agree with the mayor.

Then there is the member for Capalaba, who was initially aghast like the rest of us. He said the Straddie tax was 'a poor decision' and he was going to take it up with the minister. For a brief moment it looked like he might side with those who cannot afford a private holiday home at Point Lookout, but he was quickly rounded up and re-educated by Deputy Premier Jackie Trad. Sadly, the members for Capalaba, Redlands and Springwood have failed to stand up for the community.

It makes one wonder though what the \$31 million for economic transition is for and where have the millions gone to date because nothing has been built in three years. Where are the legacy projects? What about a major redevelopment of Dunwich harbour? What you could do or have done with that money! Tourism minister Kate Jones promised 400 ecotourism jobs.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member! Please use correct titles.

Dr ROBINSON: The member for Cooper promised 400 ecotourism jobs. Minister, I am happy for you to provide even a handful—which you have not even done.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Oodgeroo, put your comments through the chair. You know the rules.

Dr ROBINSON: The recycled minister and member for Cooper still has not provided any jobs. The Deputy Premier, Jackie Trad, said there would be 1,100 construction jobs at Cleveland harbour.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Oodgeroo, you know the standing orders about using titles. Please use correct titles.

Dr ROBINSON: The member for South Brisbane and Treasurer said there would be 1,100 construction jobs at Cleveland harbour that would save North Stradbroke Island, but where are these jobs? Locals are still waiting. Soon the last resource sector jobs will be gone. Nothing will be left but Labor's empty promises. No wonder locals call it 'Trad-broke Island'. Labor simply cannot be trusted. By keeping the workers in their four-wheel utes away, celebrity Labor MPs who do not want to mingle with the proletariat can soon holiday in peace without being pestered for selfies with tradies and their families. One does not want the view spoiled by resource workers in high-vis gear when you are on holidays. The four-wheel drive tourism tax on Straddie is the last straw.

In 2018-19 more than \$8 million was taken in beach access fees in South-East Queensland. How much more tax do Queenslanders have to pay under this government? The tripling of the Straddie tax is simply a money grab by a desperate Treasurer who thinks she can tax her way to growth. Locals are angry towards this government that does not care about people whose modest family budgets only allow them simple camping holidays. In conclusion, locals and tourists alike know you cannot trust Labor and you cannot afford Labor.