




Speech By
Robbie Katter

MEMBER FOR TRAEGER

Record of Proceedings, 3 September 2019

ADJOURNMENT

Traeger Electorate; Townsville, North West Minerals Province

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (7.19 pm): Recently I attended a Townsville Enterprises event to discuss the link between the North West Minerals Province and Townsville, which has been a special subject for me for a number of years. The other week in parliament at a meeting on CopperString, a Townsville businesswoman said that Townsville's prosperity actually runs east-west, not north-south, which I thought was a profound thing to say. Townsville residents should recall the impact that the development of Phosphate Hill, Century zinc and Cannington had. That created an explosion of growth in this area. I was living here around that time. It was notable that the prosperity that is enjoyed out there feeds back into this economy.

It is hard to estimate the number of Townsville workers in the North West Minerals Province. The number is not accurate. It is estimated to be around 1,500 to 2,000 people. To put some context around that, there has been a lot of talk in town around Queensland Nickel, the Adani coalmine and the jobs that they can produce. I would argue that the North West Minerals Province is a lot more relevant to Townsville in terms of creating jobs.

Mr Harper interjected.

Mr KATTER: It is interesting that the member for Thuringowa interjects, because I have been the lone ranger talking about this for four years. While I welcome the announcement that was made the other day and I welcome your support, I have not heard from you for the past four years. It has just been me.

Mr SPEAKER: Through the chair, member for Traeger.

Mr KATTER: My apologies, Mr Speaker. It was good to hear the announcement from the state development minister the other week. He gave some positive news, but still there is a lot more to be done. None of that is really relevant until things start to get built. On the HIPCO development, we have \$180 million for a dam in Hughenden, but until we see that water storage being built any plans are meaningless. Until we see CopperString being built, connecting us and reducing the price of power, nothing is meaningful. Until we see the Big Rocks Weir project approved by the state government and work started on the Hells Gates Dam to provide water storage for Townsville, this is all meaningless. We need to remember that, with the increase of FIFO in the regions, there is a proportional benefit for Townsville: as things grow out there, they become better here.

I want to touch on a bill put together by the member for Hinchinbrook, the First Home Owners Grant Amendment Bill, to expand the grant to rural and regional areas. The member could not table the bill because it would require amendments to the Appropriation Bill. However, I put it before the House for the consideration of members, because I think it is important to consider how relevant the first home buyers grants are to people who live in rural and regional areas. We are here in Townsville talking about these things. If there is a desire to expand and stimulate activity, while there would not be a huge

number of people who would apply for the grant, it would be a great thing for the government to consider in order to try to inject some investment into the development of housing in rural and regional areas. I table that bill.

Tabled paper. Document, 17 June 2019, titled 'Draft First Home Owner Grant (Rural and Regional Areas) Amendment Bill 2019' [1421](#).