




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

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NATURE CONSERVATION (SPECIAL WILDLIFE RESERVES) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (4.06 pm): Labor has had a long history of having an unnecessary number of tenure types for Queensland's protected areas. It has kept quiet for a few years and now this issue raises its head again with the government wanting to establish a new class of privately owned or managed protected area, almost certainly just to pander to their friends, the Greens. 'National park protection for private land,' the minister said. Sounds more like red tape for our struggling graziers and our agricultural industry to me. Honestly, even that is being too kind. This bill is an outright and unjustified attack on Queensland farmers and graziers and I am absolutely appalled.

When we were in government we reduced the number of national park tenure categories within the act from 14 to seven, which included three types of tenure which were never actually used. We streamlined tenures into two main categories: national parks and regional parks. Finally, the objective of the legislation we introduced was expanded to recognise the involvement of Indigenous people in the management of protected areas for the first time, as well as the social, cultural and commercial use of protected areas by the wider community. We provided opportunity and certainty for ecotourism industry operators by opening up our national park estate for recreational and environmentally friendly families. We implemented leases of up to 30 years for operators to strengthen our world-class ecotourism industry in Queensland. Do members know what else we did? We showed some faith in tourism operators and our key agricultural industry members that they also had the best interests of Queensland land at heart. National park protection for private land is an insult to the agricultural industry and it is just red tape and an excuse to put more jobs in Brisbane government office towers.

There have been numerous major concerns raised by stakeholders, largely relating to the murky creation of special wildlife reserves and the loose parameters regarding a state interest, which seeks to give the minister unfettered control to make declarations.

At the very least, surely meeting the criteria should require economic, environmental or community interests and state interests being satisfied, but I suppose this is an issue we have with current government ministers. They enjoy unfettered control to make declarations regardless of whether it is in the local community's best interest. As members opposite talk about the importance of protecting sensitive land, they conveniently hide that the minister for innovation and tourism has put important and sensitive community land such as Carey Park in my electorate of Southport on the chopping block for a mega casino. The minister will not rule out just how much of the Broadwater parklands this project may resume. I would like to table some maps that identify just how much of Southport's important community land could be taken because of the minister's unwillingness—

Ms ENOCH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance to the long title of the bill. I do not see how the maps that the member is proposing to table have anything to do with this bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Weir): Could you explain the relevance to the nature of the special wildlife reserves?

Mr MOLHOEK: It is my understanding that the legislation makes provision for a new class of voluntary, privately managed and protected areas or special wildlife reserves. I suggest that maybe the Broadwater parklands be declared a special wildlife reserve and that those government members opposite should do more to protect community land on the Gold Coast.

Mr Stevens interjected.

Mr MOLHOEK: I take that interjection from the member for Mermaid Beach.

Mr Ryan interjected.

Mr MOLHOEK: This is what we are reduced to, to get the minister's attention.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Southport, I have just taken advice. We will table those documents, the Speaker will consider them later on and then we will bring you back to the long title of the bill.

Mr MOLHOEK: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Prime agricultural land has been at risk for years due to the drought. We value the agriculture industry and, when we were in government, we even made efforts to lend some restricted areas to assist the graziers and their livelihoods—not lock up more of their land and put their futures on a knife edge. The Queensland Farmers' Federation said the management of pests and weeds on Crown land has created ongoing issue for landholders that abut these government managed lands. The management practices used can be restrictive and frequently do not manage pests and weeds effectively. What Queensland's protected areas really need is a focus on protecting and maintaining the current national parks before we go around locking up more land. Let me be clear: I condemn the removal of Queensland's strategic land both in the bush and on the coast, and I also condemn this Labor government's proposed resumption of public land in Southport.