




Speech By  
**Tim Mander**

**MEMBER FOR EVERTON**

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**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (GREAT BARRIER REEF PROTECTION MEASURES) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (5.02 pm): I rise to speak on the Environmental Protection (Great Barrier Reef Protection Measures) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. As has been already stated by other speakers from this side of the House, we will oppose the bill. One question that we have to ask is: why does the Palaszczuk Labor government hate the regions?

**Ms Fentiman:** There's more of us in the regions than you.

**Mr MANDER:** I take that interjection—

**An opposition member:** Not really.

**Mr MANDER:**—because that is exactly right: not really. They regard the suburbs of Townsville, Cairns and Mackay as being in the regions. Regions are far beyond those city suburbs. Why does the Palaszczuk government hate the regions? Recently, I did an interview with Ray Hadley on 4BC.

**Ms Richards** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms McMillan): Order, member for Redlands!

**Mr MANDER:** That is what they regard as the regions: Redlands. Ray Hadley asked me if I thought there was a great chasm between the regions, and Brisbane and the south-east corner in the state at the moment. I said, 'I think there is a growing chasm and is it any wonder with the policies introduced by the Palaszczuk government that are anti regions.' This government was on an anti-mining crusade, but had a miraculous turnaround after the May election. We know about the vegetation management laws. We know about the commercial fishermen whom they are trying to put out of business. Now we see the same attack against our farmers who are producing the food that we need to live, not just in this state and country but also overseas.

One would think that they would have learned a lesson from the last federal election. They learned a lesson with regard to the mining industry, because they did the greatest flip-flop of all time and the Premier came in here and said that she had had a gutful and was fed up with her own policies—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member, that term is unparliamentary. I ask you to withdraw.

**Mr MANDER:** I withdraw. We saw the great backflip that happened then. What will it take for this government to realise that they need to listen to the regions and that they need to stop persecuting and victimising them with policies that are totally unnecessary?

**Mr Watts:** A federal election.

**Mr MANDER:** There was a federal election—and I take that interjection—but I think they will also require a result in the state election, because people are waiting on their verandahs and on their decks with their baseball bats for this government. There is no doubt about it. They will send a message to the member for Thuringowa, the member for Townsville, the member for Mundingburra, the member for Mackay, the member for Barron River—

**An opposition member:** Cairns and Maryborough.

**Mr MANDER:** I take the interjection—and the members for Cairns and Maryborough, as well, that they will not accept policies that are anti regions, which is exactly what these are.

In the past in the regions, lobby groups have tried to be very apolitical. They understand that they have to work with both sides of government. However, the gloves are off. No other government has ever united all of those peak bodies and lobby groups, but now they are coming together to fight the anti-region policies of the Labor government. The policy that we are discussing at the moment is the most recent. We have had the Canegrowers, AgForce, the Australian Banana Growers Council, Growcom, the Queensland Farmers' Federation, the Green Shirts Movement all those groups—

**Mr Harper** interjected.

**Mr MANDER:** I can tell the member for Thuringowa that they are not very happy. They may have been consulted, but they are not very happy because, as was said earlier, consultation is about listening and reacting. The member for Thuringowa has a great grin on his face now, but he will not in October 2020 when they will have their revenge on the sitting members representing Townsville.

There is so much wrong with these laws that it is not funny. Many members on this side of the House have detailed that and the shadow minister did so very articulately, but there are a few things that we need to highlight. This is overreach at its greatest. It is bureaucratic. It is burdensome. It is unnecessary. It shows that they have no appreciation of farm practices and what small businesses have to go through to survive.

The legislation gives power to bureaucrats, not elected officials. It is totally political. In the end, it says that the Labor government does not trust farmers. The government does not trust people who derive their income from the land and who have done so for decades, people who also rely on the health of their land for their future income. Those people are not silly. Those people know good farm practice. They also know that they have responsibilities because they care for the reef as we care for the reef. They know that they have to change some of their practices and that is what they have been doing.

Last week the member for Burdekin took me on a road trip. We went to a place called Clare, which is about an hour and a half outside Townsville. We visited some cane farms. It was a great experience. I had the fantastic opportunity to be in a harvester, watch how it works and see the skill of those who operate this machinery. They were really proud of their practices and that is why they wanted me to be there. They wanted to show somebody like me—a city boy, a Brisbane boy, a person who has lived in the city all their life and has an urban electorate—what they are doing.

**Mr Harper** interjected.

**Mr MANDER:** I will take that interjection. That shows us how seriously the member for Thuringowa takes this. These are people in his area. I was initially in his electorate but then went out of his electorate. That shows how seriously they take this issue.

These people on the land wanted to show me how they have changed their practices to follow best practice and make sure they are environmentally friendly. I met with Ricky Mio and Russell Hoare, both canefarmers of a couple of generations. Russell was proud of the way he had reconfigured his land to make sure water drained to a certain point. He proved that the so-called toxic water in his dam was not toxic. There were fish jumping in the dam. There were birds around it. For the television cameras Russell recently got a glass of water out of that dam and drank it to show how pure the water is. They are the efforts they are going to.

Ricky Mio, of the Mio family—one of the great cane producers in this state—has put millions of dollars into dams to be self-sufficient on their cane farms. He was proud of that and proud of the contribution they are making to the environment.

Our canefarmers and our primary producers are very conscious of protecting the environment. They know that they have had to change their practices. They are doing everything they can to do that. The last thing they need is bureaucratic, onerous, burdensome regulations and requirements that make their job a heck of a lot harder and a heck of a lot more expensive. These things are eventually passed on to the consumer.

We should be doing everything possible to make sure it is easier for primary producers to do what they do best—that is, to feed us. This government—because of politics, because of ideology, because of Greens preferences—just does not listen. They are good at charades. They are good at going out there and saying they are consulting. As has been said many times already, consultation means listening—listening to the experts and listening to the people out there who have been suffering.

**Mr Harper** interjected.

**Mr MANDER:** The member for Thuringowa—

**Mr Crisafulli:** 'Mr 31 per cent'.

**Mr MANDER:** 'Mr 31 per cent' and the other Townsville members are going to find out shortly what people of regional Queensland think. They have had enough of a government that is anti regions, anti jobs, anti resources, anti farmers and anti commercial fishermen. Anything to do with the regions they are against.