




Speech By
Hon. Mark Furner

MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE

Record of Proceedings, 18 June 2020

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Rural Economic Development Grants

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries) (2.15 pm): Last week I was fortunate to visit regions along the southern Queensland border and see firsthand the Palaszczuk government's work in job creation through the Rural Economic Development Grants scheme. I was thrilled to meet farmers who are focussing on opportunities that will impact their future, which is very bright. It was wonderful to see the grants in action, building on the infrastructure that will create regional jobs, as we unite and recover from the effects of the pandemic that we are in.

Last week during my travels from Toowoomba to Warwick, through the border communities from Stanthorpe to Goondiwindi, over and over again I was given a consistent message: keep the borders closed. Over and over again along the southern border I was told, 'We do not want to see a second wave of COVID-19 in Queensland.' Those opposite claim to know what the average Queenslanders in the pub is saying about border restrictions, but I can tell the House what they are saying in the Nindigully Pub. Those opposite should listen to what people throughout Queensland are saying, not just those who live along the eastern coast.

The Nindigully Pub is one of the fortunate 6,000 businesses supported through this government's \$1 billion COVID-19 job support scheme. They are very grateful for the Palaszczuk government's support. They are also very grateful that the borders remain closed. Why? Because from day one the Palaszczuk government has listened to the advice of our Chief Health Officer and put the health of Queenslanders first. On Tuesday of this week I was having a conversation about border closures with Mike Guerin, the CEO of AgForce. Recently he travelled through northern Queensland and people were telling him to keep the borders closed, because they want to keep Queenslanders safe.

It is painfully obvious that those opposite have stopped listening to Queenslanders and they have definitely stopped listening to AgForce. They should ensure that they have their ear to the ground in the regions or they will lose their National Party seats, most likely to Clive Palmer. We know what the LNP colours stand for. The blue and yellow stand for the 'Liberal National Palmer Party'. We know that their agenda is to build the *Titanic II*. They will be roaming the oceans, changing the deckchairs and wondering where to go. They will be aimlessly travelling the oceans with no clear direction or policy and certainly without listening to Queenslanders. The Palaszczuk government has listened to the Chief Health Officer's advice on the border and it has passed the pub test across Queensland.