



Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Furner**


**MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE**

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Record of Proceedings, 2 December 2020

**MOTION**

**Agriculture Industry**

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (5.03 pm): I move the following amendment—

That the motion be amended by omitting all words after 'drought' and inserting the following words:

4. notes the ongoing support from the Palaszczuk government to the Queensland agricultural sector; and
5. notes the Morrison government's failures in the agriculture sector.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr FURNER:** That woke them up.

This is the LNP that has learnt nothing and forgotten everything when it comes to agricultural policy in this state. The member for Gympie may be inaudible to many stakeholders, but as the shadow minister for this great department it is important that there is a competent representative of alternative views. Sadly for the member for Gympie, competency is not a word I have heard mentioned next to any of his talents that I am yet to see.

This government has a long tradition of looking after the farmers of this state when it comes to drought—at the same time as the LNP misleads its constituents when it comes to drought. I say for the member for Gympie's benefit—a member who has himself previously had an individually droughted property and should know the process, and yet clearly does not—that those who are drought declared and remain drought declared will get support as long as the current drought lasts. The only way the LNP could not understand that statement is if it is ignorant or mischievous. Which one is it? When those opposite cannot understand simple statements, it is no surprise the people of Queensland did not trust them at the recent election.

Another reason the LNP cannot be trusted is that their legacy is woeful. In the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries 600 staff were cut under their watch—wholesale staff cuts by the LNP, something that has not gone unnoticed. Those opposite cut biosecurity staff by 26 per cent. That is something Labor would never do.

**Mr Millar** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Minister, resume your seat. Member for Gregory, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr FURNER:** Our budgets have been higher than the LNP budgets when it comes to agriculture. When travelling through regional Queensland I have never had a stakeholder, farmer or passer-by come up to me and say that the LNP's time in government was a good time for them. No-one in regional Queensland was jumping for joy when it came to the LNP campaign or policies. Maybe that is why there are five fewer LNP members opposite. In comparison, some of the letters of congratulations I have received since being reappointed to my portfolio have left me almost blushing!

Unlike the industry expectations of us, those opposite must be delusional to think that they could deliver anything meaningful when it comes to agriculture. It is clear that those opposite are cut from the same cloth as their federal counterparts—hopeless yet shameless. The motion mentions trading relationships. The federal government has been missing in action in that space and has been for many years. They have been picking fights with our greatest trading partner, China, and wanting to take them on and destroy the agriculture and resources sectors.

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Buderim, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr FURNER:** Recently I conducted a virtual trade mission with Japan. The Palaszczuk government put in \$5 million to do this during the difficult time of COVID-19. They are our greatest agricultural trading partner. We will be doing more virtual trade missions with South Korea and China in the near future. I note that, as a result of that virtual trade mission, there have been shipments of produce like kabocha pumpkin to Japan by Qualipac in the Lockyer Valley.

Where have the federal government or the LNP been here in Queensland on this matter? They have been missing on trade matters, missing on workforce issues and missing on drought policy or COVID-19 responses. When it comes to delivery, what does the member for Broadwater's hero, Mr Campbell Newman, say about Scott Morrison and his merry band of ministers? An article states—

'After being in office for seven and a half years, this Coalition Government has not done a thing for northern agriculture or built a dam,' he raged.

They never will. They are a government of spin. No substance and they do nothing.

They are a disgrace. You can quote me on that.

That is the same bloke who ran the LNP saying that. That is the same bloke the member for Broadwater noted for 'the importance of his drive and leadership'. I have to say that Mr Newman is not wrong about the federal failures for Queensland. It seems that those opposite have learnt nothing from the election and we see the same tired, old attacks and same silly arguments presented by them. I look forward to estimates next week. As 'Skinhead' from the *Longreach Leader* said, 'It may as well be inaudible.'