




Speech By
Hon. Mark Furner

MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE

Record of Proceedings, 2 September 2021

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT

Biosecurity

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (2.54 pm): As Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries, I take biosecurity seriously—as does the Palaszczuk government. It is no surprise that the federal LNP government has the deck stacked against us—stacked against our primary producers in this state and across the board. It all starts with the federal government's 25 per cent cut in the number of frontline biosecurity workers. Failures on the border have been noted by its own Inspector-General of Biosecurity and the Commonwealth Audit Office.

Australians have had enough of the *Ruby Princess* standards and 'gold' standards of the LNP. Biosecurity is no game, yet the federal LNP treat it as a game to gamble on, gambling at the expense of our farmers and fishers. Because they think it is such a game, they even have a deck of cards to go along with it. This deck may have the 52 reasons the federal LNP government should not be re-elected. They can play poker with a khapra beetle. Instead of an ace in the hole, it is a hole at the border. To make it worse, at the biosecurity casino the LNP always seems to let the pests win. It is clear that, over this and the past few terms of government, it has been playing games rather than playing fair with our farmers. Instead of gin rummy, it is importation of Mexican limes for their gin! It has been a bust when it comes to looking after agriculture. I expected to see David Littleproud as the joker of the pack but, sadly, the joke is on agriculture in this and every other state. I table what it has circulated.

Tabled paper: Deck of cards produced by the Australian government titled 'Australia's National Priority Plant Pest: International years of Plant Health 2020' (Pack contains 52 cards depicting plant pests) [1338](#).

As the song goes, 'You've got to know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em'—

Mr Millar interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Member for Gregory.

Mr FURNER:—'know when to walk away'—

Mr Millar interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Gregory.

Mr FURNER:—'and know when to run.'

Mr Millar interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Gregory!

Mr FURNER: It is time for the federal government to walk away and run!

Mr Millar interjected.

Mr FURNER: In this case, the quicker the voters make the right choice and hold the LNP to account, fold the ballot paper after voting for a Labor government—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Gregory, I cautioned you three times. This is the last time I will give a caution. The next one will be a warning.

Mr FURNER: Thank for your protection, Madam Deputy Speaker. In this case, the quicker the voters make the right choice and hold the LNP to account, fold the ballot paper after voting for an Albanese Labor government, the sooner they can walk away knowing that biosecurity is in safe hands after running the LNP out of town.

As someone who has always been willing to call a spade a spade, I speak from the heart when I say that the LNP club has form on neglecting biosecurity at state and federal levels by cuts, by failures and by diamond standard levels of neglect. I have seen the destruction the LNP caused while in government. It is apt that they go and play their games elsewhere. They need to stop dealing Queensland farmers a bad hand when it comes to biosecurity as they have always delivered. There is nothing at the front door and nothing on the borders—and that is all they have form for. That is why they will go at the next federal election.