




Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

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FOOD (LABELLING OF SEAFOOD) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (6.40 pm): I rise to support the bill before the House, the Food (Labelling of Seafood) Amendment Bill 2021. I do so with great pleasure because it was a policy that I took to the last election. On top of that, I committed an extra \$1 million to make sure that there was money to develop, implement and market this great policy. One would think, member for Traeger, that the Labor government would do exactly that.

I was listening intently to the member for Ipswich West thinking, 'Oh my goodness me.' I saw the opposition whip turn around. We were all listening intently. The three Katter blokes were because it sounded like the member for Ipswich West had picked up a speech in support of the bill that is before the House. I cannot wait until the vote. It took the member for Ipswich West nine minutes of talking about what a wonderful idea this is, we are going to have more people eating seafood—absolutely, member for Ipswich West, that is the intent of the bill—but right at the last minute when we think he is about to support us he absolutely flip-flops just like a fish.

Mr MADDEN: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): The member has taken personal offence. I ask you to withdraw.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There has been some unparliamentary language. Can I ask you to withdraw that as well?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: The 'blokes'?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I withdraw and I withdraw unreservedly. I am quite sure they get called that a lot. The reason I support this is that I stand with industry. I note that in its report the Barramundi Farmers Association state how good the industry would be if we got into mandatory seafood labelling. It is in black and white. We had to sit here and listen to the minister for agriculture say, 'If you read the report'. Of course we have read the report. It is where we are getting the speeches from. It is this report and the submissions that support the bill. The Labor members, because they go, 'Hang on, we could never do something to support the industry,' decide to vote against it even though the report states—

When mandatory labelling came into the retail sector, Australian barramundi went from 150 tonnes in the retail sector to 4,000 tonnes.

Basically this is saying, 'Get on with it, government, and do it!' That is what the Barramundi Farmers Association think. That is what all of industry think. The only people who do not think that are members of the Labor government because for some reason, even though everyone else has done their homework, they refuse to listen and they refuse to support the fishing industry. In my role as shadow water minister I am more than happy to have more water, more ponds, so we can grow our aquaculture industry. Imagine if the Labor Party did not rip down Paradise Dam wall. Imagine the aquaculture, the extra water.

Ms Camm: Sooty grunter!

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Absolutely, we could have a sooty grunter industry. We could have a bass industry. We could have a yellowbelly industry.

Mr Nicholls: It would be fishing paradise.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It would be fishing paradise. I take that interjection from the member for Clayfield. If only the Labor government supported the people of the Wide Bay and Bundaberg and did not rip down the dam wall; imagine the aquaculture industry we could have. Imagine that, member for Bundaberg.

Mr Smith: Imagine when you are still there.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for Bundaberg, you are next on the speaking list.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I take the interjection from the member for Bundaberg. If we were in government we would implement the policy and we would support the agriculture, fishing and aquaculture industries. We would also be supporting consumers. Consumers want to know that they are eating Australian fish. They want to know that they are eating Queensland fish. That would be fantastic.

I would hate to be critical of anything to do with the Vietnamese fishing industry. I note that the agriculture minister has not talked about it in the House this week. He went to Vietnam last week. I do not think any businesses were invited. I do not know who he met. It was apparently a trade mission. We do not know anything about it because the minister for agriculture is not talking about it. I wonder what he is hiding. Was he over there promoting the Vietnamese fishing industry? Who would know.

Mr Nicholls: He did not miss cabinet, that's for sure.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: That is a very good point. I take that interjection. The minister for agriculture did not miss cabinet. I wonder why. That is right, because it was not on and he was probably on a fishing trawler in Vietnam, not a superyacht. I wonder whether that is where the minister for agriculture and fisheries was. He certainly did not spend the week promoting the Queensland fishing industry. He was certainly not backing the seafood industry. I stand with the shadow minister for agriculture, fisheries and forestry in supporting the member for Traeger's bill because it is common sense.

The Northern Territory brought this policy in in 2008 and it has been a massive success. That is why industry, the opposition, the crossbenches, even the New South Wales Labor government, support the introduction of seafood labelling. Obviously the Labor government here in Queensland do not get it. They do not want to support the Queensland fishing industry and there is no greater example than this. Why do they not want to support Queensland consumers eating Queensland fish? I simply do not get it. I mentioned Paradise Dam.

A government member: Oh God!

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I take the interjection of 'Oh God' from the member for Pine Rivers. That shows the lack of understanding of the importance of water in Queensland. She rolls her eyes and says, 'Oh God.' I took the interjection because I think it is important that I do. I am entitled to speak to that interjection. The member for Pine Rivers or someone else talked about the fish shop that she goes to. How good would it be if the member for Pine Rivers could go in and say, 'I am going to support Queensland? I am not going to buy the Vietnamese fish'? She possibly is buying Vietnamese fish because, like the agriculture minister, who heads off to Vietnam to support the Vietnamese fishing industry, she would not know. Would it not be amazing if we supported Queensland fishing and the member for Pine Rivers got to buy a bit of bass that may or may not have been farmed out of Paradise Dam? Would that not be a great idea?

This is a serious issue. The Queensland fishing industry deserves our support. When people make submissions to a parliamentary inquiry, they should certainly be listened to. The opposition members of the committee, the member for Lockyer and the member for Burleigh, made a very clear statement of reservation because, even though all of the submitters supported the premise of this bill, through this report the government members decided to vote against it. That is why the opposition members wrote a dissenting report and they were extremely eloquent in writing it. It is important that we support the Queensland fishing industry. We know that the Labor Party wants to shut down the commercial fishing industry in Queensland and does so every single step of the way. It is only this side of the House that supports the fishing industry and supports the Queensland consumers who want to support Queensland seafood. That is why we support this bill.