




Speech By
Nikki Boyd

MEMBER FOR PINE RIVERS

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FOOD (LABELLING OF SEAFOOD) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (5.56 pm): I rise today to speak against the Food (Labelling of Seafood) Amendment Bill 2021. It is quite astounding—

Mr Dametto: Oh!

Ms BOYD: Yes, it is a surprise to you, I am sure, member for Hinchinbrook. It is quite astounding, though, to follow on from that speech from the member for Burleigh, who made a number of assertions that, quite frankly, were incorrect. As a member of this House in the 55th Parliament, I served on a legal affairs committee that toured extensively with the member for Traeger and recommended that bills that the Katter party put before the House as private members' bills be passed. This may well come back to backfire on me now that you are sitting in the chair, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): I hope that is not a reflection on the chair, member for Pine Rivers. I will let that one slip.

Ms BOYD: I pick up on a point made earlier about the recommendation the committee made in its report that, rather than make amendments to the private member's bill, this proposition should see its way through to the federal government. I think that is the best place for it to be dealt with, as does the committee.

From the outset I acknowledge the Queensland fishing and seafood sectors and the business community for their really valuable contributions to this bill. This bill proposes to introduce mandatory country-of-origin labelling for seafood sold at dining outlets across Queensland. I note, as previous speakers have, that the State Development and Regional Industries Committee recommends that the bill not be passed.

My contribution on this bill I intend to be concise. The committee's examination of this bill has identified fundamental flaws in the content of the bill, in particular the Food Act 2006 being used as proposed along with inconsistencies from our commitments under the Food Regulation Agreement. Through the committee process, the advice of Queensland Health was that the amendments would potentially be incompatible with the national Food Regulation Agreement and that any reform in this area must be led by the Commonwealth in collaboration with all states and territories.

For those who are confused about why this is not legislation the committee could support, let us be really clear. We know through the hard work of the committee and the department that proposals for country-of-origin labelling of seafood are not a public health and safety issue but should be considered a consumer protection and information issue. One seeking to achieve the policy objective of this bill would need the right act. This bill does not propose that.

Ms Grace: A minor problem.

Ms BOYD: I take the interjection from the member for McConnel. It is a small oversight for sure. To be very clear to those opposite who have been saying on high repeat that they cannot understand why the government would not support it, this is why. The member for Traeger came into this place and

in his second reading speech he said that not supporting this bill is to continue to endorse the deceit of consumers. This may well be his opinion, but he has not proposed a way to fix it through this bill. This bill is fundamentally flawed. That needs to be highlighted and the record set straight.

The proposition of introducing mandatory country-of-origin labelling for seafood sold at dining outlets is not a new one. It is one that has already been examined in some detail, the results of which found that the cost to industry and government by far outweighed the benefits. I repeat: the cost to industry and government by far outweighed the benefits. It is not a notion and it is not an opinion. Rather, it is a position that has been established through considerable research. I note with interest that those opposing the findings do so by dismissing them as something that is unworthy of consideration, and that is a reckless approach. I also note that the committee has recommended that the proposed initiative be sent to the federal government for investigation.

In closing, I thank the committee for their work on this bill. Like the committee, while I cannot support this private member's bill, I also commend the Katter party for introducing it. I acknowledge that here in this parliament while the LNP is missing in terms of introducing private members' bills, the Katter party is punching well and truly above its weight. I thank them wholeheartedly—

An honourable member interjected.

Ms BOYD: I do enjoy sitting here and heckling them, but I thank them wholeheartedly for bringing forward—

Mr Dametto: We enjoy it as well.

Ms BOYD: Great, I am glad to hear that is mutual. I thank them for bringing forward these proposals.

Mr McDonald: An LNP policy.

Ms BOYD: While the LNP may well consider it to be their policy, I think it would stand in stark contrast to their mantra of cutting red tape for small business. I think there are some inconsistencies there, which is not uncommon for the LNP, but that is okay.

Ms Grace: They did nothing federally for 10 years.

Ms BOYD: I take the interjection from the minister.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): The Minister for Education will cease her interjections.

Ms BOYD: In wrapping up, I thank the committee for the work it has done on this bill. Like the committee, I do not believe this is a bill that I can support.