




Speech By
Robbie Katter

MEMBER FOR TRAEGER

Record of Proceedings, 29 November 2022

MOTION

Voice to Parliament

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (12.00 pm): I rise to make a quick and impromptu contribution to this motion. I must admit that I have not read the whole of the Uluru statement. I understand what it means and I understand some of the virtues of what it is trying to achieve. However, what I really understand is the people that I interact with in my electorate and the numerous First Australian people who come to my office every week. I am very proud that they will come in to talk to me about things, but this has never been raised with me. I have been going to Doomadgee and Mornington for 10 years and this has never been raised with me. What has been raised with me is how they get a job and what I can do to help them with their blue card. I have been asked how I can help them with these things. I recall a conversation that I had years ago in the coffee lounge with an MP who said, 'The fix for everything, mate, is a treaty.' I thought that I was a bloke who liked trying to fix problems in politics and I could not see how a treaty was going to help these people get a job in Doomadgee or in Mornington. That is what I am about fixing.

I could agree with this. I am not saying that I disagree with it, but what I get really annoyed about is that this becomes the focus and people say, 'Everything will be solved by the treaty.' Rather, we need to work with things on the ground now. I have been coming in here now for 10 years trying to get action on things like blue cards and title deeds. An alcohol management plan at Mornington Island took about eight or nine years to get. They are the things that are tricky and that are hard, but this becomes the priority. I could be excused for saying that, despite some very well-meaning people driving for things that they want and saying that this will be the answer to all of their prayers, I am not sure I agree with that. There is a lot of stuff that we should be doing right now that is a priority and it is very easy to use this as a smokescreen. We are putting in all of this effort here, but we are forgetting the things that are right in front of our noses and we are not acting on those.

An honourable member: Do both.

Mr KATTER: I take that interjection: why can we not do both? That is a very good question, because I have been putting these things on the table now and it confuses me why we are not acting on them. That is what I am saying. I have been here for 10 years saying, 'How about we have some action on blue cards?' I have my third bill before the parliament now and it is going to be knocked down. If members were to go to these communities and ask them what they want, they want some action on blue cards.

Ms Grace: Blue cards aren't the answer to everything, Robbie.

Mr KATTER: I do not have the answer to anything. You are quite right, Minister: I do not have the answer to everything, but I understand that blue cards are an issue.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Pause the clock. Minister, you will stop your interjections across the chamber.

Mr KATTER: I understand where the problems are and I am not afraid to walk away from them or to try to resolve them, not by saying that everything will be solved by a treaty, and that is what I think is happening here.