




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR HILL

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ADJOURNMENT

Northern Iron and Brass Foundry

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (6.19 pm): Poor government legislation is threatening the closure of an 89-year-old business which employs 70 workers in Innisfail. Established in 1934, Northern Iron and Brass Foundry has been proudly manufacturing in Innisfail for nearly 90 years. It provides essential heavy-duty fittings and product to the mining, rail, sugar and other industries, which employ thousands of Queenslanders. However, the business has been under threat since the government introduced its waste reduction levy bill in 2019. Overnight NIBF faced a 200 per cent increase in waste levy costs. At the time I raised this in parliament and held meetings with the minister, NIBF and the department. NIBF was granted a financial exemption with assurances that this would be fixed, but four years later there is still no solution.

NIBF has exhausted every possible option to recycle on site. It does not have waste facilities at its door like businesses in major cities do. It will be left with no other option but to transport waste nearly 300 kilometres to Townsville as it cannot be dumped locally. This will add hundreds of thousands of dollars of extra cost which will potentially close down the business, but that is not all the foundry has been punished with. The changes and removal of electricity tariff 37 forced the foundry into higher tariffs, increasing its electricity costs by 40 per cent. Add to that the fact that the business emergency management levy went from \$16,000 to \$48,000 a year.

Members should be able to understand why the business feels gutted, yet I continue to see government members of parliament pat themselves on the back about how they are backing the workers in the manufacturing industry. The ALP has abandoned the average worker and ignored the manufacturing industry in regional Queensland. The Labor Party's founders, who stood under the Tree of Knowledge, would be turning in their graves. In September the Premier stated—

We know that we have the best manufacturers right here in Queensland. I want to see more young people, more women, getting into manufacturing because these jobs are good secure jobs for Queenslanders.

Except if they live in regional Queensland! All Northern Iron and Brass Foundry is asking for is urgency and some empathy in working with it to amend the legislation to allow the business to keep its doors open and keep employing locals. That is not much to ask for. What better reason is there than to save an 89-year-old business and 70 manufacturing jobs?