



Speech By  
**Craig Crawford**


**MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER**

---

Record of Proceedings, 14 February 2024

**MOTION**

**Miles Labor Government**

 **Mr CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (5.31 pm): Well, well, well. Here we go again! I was sitting there earlier trying to work out why this motion was coming up. I thought, 'What is it that the MPs in Far North Queensland have done that has suddenly drawn the ire of the entire LNP? Why is it us? Is it our turn?' Members opposite have obviously put the blowtorch on Townsville from time to time. I think even Bundaberg was given a go. I was trying to work out, 'Why us? What did I do?' Then I realised: they are going on a holiday. They all are coming to Cairns on a holiday, so they are ramping it all up. That is what this is all about. That is cool; I am okay with that. Members opposite are welcome to come up and spend some of their hard-earned money in my electorate. That is really good. I am happy to see them. It was at the Cairns regional parliament that the LNP last ran one of their anti Far North Queensland rant motions. I suppose our turn has come around again.

I am very proud to come from the Far North. I am very proud to represent an electorate in the Far North. I am very proud of what Far North Queensland stands for, with our iconic people, lifestyle, amazing landscape and amazing backdrop. I am also proud to be joined by my FNQ colleagues and friends in this House: the members for Cairns, Cook, Mulgrave and Hill. Between the five of us, we look after an incredibly large and diverse landscape—a landscape that was severely tested by Mother Nature barely a few months ago with a rain bomb at the tail end of Cyclone Jasper which dumped over 2½ metres of water over catchments in different parts of Far North Queensland. Certainly, the bullseye landed right in the Barron River electorate.

The LNP has failed to win the seats of Cairns, Cook and Barron River three terms running. Come October, it will be three months shy of 10 years since the LNP held any of these seats. The next northern LNP member is in the Burdekin. When I look at the speaking list I see the members for Toowoomba South, Condamine and Currumbin. These people are from the New South Wales border! I might as well be getting a lecture from the Victorian Liberal Party on how to run things in Far North Queensland—seriously. Voters in the Far North acted with haste in 2015 to chuck this lot out. The voters of my electorate remember Campbell Newman well.

I want to mention some of the comments by the member for Condamine about the Kuranda Range and the flooding and damage that occurred. I commend the great work of state agencies after the event, particularly the staff of RoadTek. As employees of TMR, they led a massive team of civil construction companies to clear the most incredible volume of landslide debris in some of the most challenging work sites that I ever have seen. On the Captain Cook Highway north of Ellis Beach, there was a 300-tonne boulder on the road that they had to blow up with explosives. There was another 100-tonne boulder hanging up about 40 metres which they had to use excavators to try and get to. It was incredible work. On the Kuranda Range, there was incredible work from RoadTek crews to get that

road open. It is one of the most challenging geological places on which a road can be built. That mountain has been trying for a long time now to throw the road off the side. It is only our hardworking crews that can keep it there.

The LNP talk a big game when it comes to the cost of living and electricity prices, but I saw Ergon, Energex, Powerlink and CleanCo all ramp up their workforce to come to Far North Queensland and put the lights back on. That is a workforce I believe was being fattened up for sale when the LNP were in government. We have to wonder what things would be like up there now if overseas companies owned all of those assets. Would all of those people come up to Far North Queensland or would the lights still be off?