




Speech By
Dale Last

MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN

Record of Proceedings, 18 April 2024

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Glenden

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.07 pm): Who could forget 23 August last year when the police minister, speaking on the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, introduced an amendment to the Mineral Resources Act 1989 regarding the community of Glenden. It was an amendment introduced without any scrutiny by a parliamentary committee and without any consultation with QCoal, the company at the centre of this amendment. It defies belief that, in a desperate attempt to appear relevant, the government gave members of this House just 19 minutes to consider an amendment that would, according to those opposite, save Glenden. The question is: has that amendment saved Glenden?

Last week, I spent time in Glenden and spoke with residents and business owners. Eight months after that amendment passed through parliament, I can categorically say that nothing has changed in that community. That community continues to wither on the vine and look for assistance. It is highly likely that nothing will change following QCoal's advice that a substantial number of their workers would rather resign than move to Glenden forcibly.

When *The Courier-Mail* ran a story relating to Glenden on March 30, the comments section of their website came to life with contributors comparing the actions of this government with what we see in North Korea or China. As one contributor commented, 'This is a breach of human rights.' Workers from Byerwen Mine have contacted me directly, saying that they will quit their job before they uproot their family. That is a fact that this government failed to consider. One worker who owns a home near Airlie Beach hit the nail on the head when he said that this government was telling him that they would decide where his children went to school and that this government was telling him that his wife would need to resign from her job in a medical practice.

This amendment is in almost complete opposition to this government's Strong and Sustainable Resource Communities Act 2017 that, according to the government, would ensure residents of communities within a 125-kilometre radius of a large resource project benefitted from the operation of that project. If that act were applied in the case of Glenden, mines as far north as Collinsville and as far south as Saraji would need to contribute to Glenden's future—but no. This amendment set a precedent that, when this government wants a good headline, no-one is safe. By engaging in meaningful consultation with stakeholders and workers, there is no doubt that we can find a solution and ensure Glenden's future. After all, we all have a responsibility to ensure that that is exactly what happens.

(Time expired)