



Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Furner**


**MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE**

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Record of Proceedings, 2 April 2025

**MOTION**

**Weather Events, Response**

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (8.01 pm): I wonder whether 101 years ago when Dorothea Mackellar put the words into her poem *My Country* 'Of droughts and flooding rains' she predicted what our country would experience in these times. In the last century we have seen it all. We have seen the droughts. We have seen the rains.

In the seven years that I was the agriculture minister I saw it all. I remember going up the Flinders Highway and seeing the loss of over 500,000 head of cattle from the monsoonal event that sat over Townsville for 14 days and then headed west, devastating that area of Queensland. Now we see the same devastation in South-West Queensland.

Our hearts go out to our farmers—those who feed us and provide economic benefits and jobs in regional areas. I refer to places like Charleville where Western Meat Producers support over 200 jobs in that community. They produce the goat meat to export to other parts of the world. We need to come together and make sure we look after those people.

I am very pleased—and I knew it would happen—that this government worked with the federal government to support people with grants of up to \$75,000. Our support needs to go beyond that. No doubt the price of meat will go up. That is where Queenslanders and Australians should come together and support our farmers. Bearing the small increase in meat prices is a small price to pay for the devastation and impact that families in these communities have experienced.

QRIDA, the Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority, will work tirelessly to supply those grants. They work alongside the good men and women of the Department of Primary Industries who are doing the surveys now. That is a small indication of what will be the overall impact in the future. In the coming days, there will no doubt be more identification of the impacts our farmers have experienced and the impacts on the land.

I wonder whether there will be a time in the future where we will see fewer natural events. I doubt it. I think the events are becoming more horrific and having more of an impact on our farmers, our communities and our lands. Nevertheless, we need to make sure we are there to provide support. That is what good governments do. The opposition and government will work together to ensure that our farmers and our Western Queensland communities are serviced and taken care of.

I send my wishes to the good men and women of Western Queensland. They are certainly the salt of the earth when it comes to these events. They are bred tough.