




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MACKAY

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE, REPORT

 **Mr DALTON** (Mackay—LNP) (8.07 pm): This was my first estimates—a process that is an important part of accountability in this House. It provides Queenslanders with a clear picture of how their money is being spent and, just as importantly, where Labor failed to deliver. One thing is crystal clear: after nearly a decade of government, Labor has left Queensland's primary industries weakened by neglect and short-sighted decisions. Under Labor our biosecurity systems were stretched to breaking point and we saw invasive pests like fire ants and weeds advance while frontline staff were cut back. The cost of this neglect is still being borne by our farmers and regional communities. Under Labor regional water infrastructure stalled and projects promised were delayed, shelved or announced, and again without delivery. Farmers were left without the water security that they need to grow Queensland's food and fibre. Under Labor red tape piled up higher while farmgate profitability fell lower. Rather than backing our producers, Labor buried them in compliance and uncertainty.

The contrast with the LNP government's approach could not be clearer. The LNP budget for primary industries is about delivery, not delay. It is about backing the industries that feed us, clothe us and underpin tens of thousands of regional jobs. We are strengthening biosecurity with real investment with boots on the ground and the technology needed to protect our borders and our farms. We are investing in water infrastructure, delivering long promised dams, pipelines and upgrades which will create certainty for farmers to unlock regional economic growth.

We are cutting red tape, providing certainty around land and resource use and restoring confidence for the agricultural, fishery and forestry sectors. Critically, we are investing in innovation, supporting new technologies and value-adding opportunities that will keep Queenslanders competitive in global markets. A clear example of this is the difference in fisheries management. For years under Labor, Queensland fisheries were forced to operate under flawed science and heavy-handed restrictions. Nowhere was it clearer than in Labor's disastrous Spanish mackerel stock assessment which slashed catch limits, threatened jobs and devastated confidence in both the commercial and recreational sectors.

This LNP government has listened, acted and delivered. A new credible, science-based assessment has overturned Labor's botched work and confirmed what fishers and experts were saying all along: Spanish mackerel stocks are sustainable and growing. As a result, the government is increasing the catch limits for both commercial and recreational fishers, providing long overdue certainty and restoring fairness. For Mackay and for the communities up and down the coast, this decision means stronger local economies, more jobs and a renewed confidence that our fisheries will be managed and responsibly sustained.

This is what good government looks like—listening to industry, respecting science and delivering outcomes that balance sustainability with prosperity. These are not empty announcements; they are

budgeted, they are funded and they are being delivered. Queensland primary producers deserve more than platitudes. They deserve a government that has their back. For too long under Labor our farmers were treated as an afterthought. Today under the LNP they are front and centre in building a stronger Queensland economy.

The estimates hearing confirmed what producers already know: this is a government focused on outcomes, not excuses. I reaffirm my strong support for the LNP government's vision for a resilient, competitive and prosperous primary industries sector in Queensland. I thank the staff for their dedication. From the DGs to the people who wrote the reports, they were very informative and very useful.