



Speech By  
**Robbie Katter**


**MEMBER FOR TRAEGER**

---

Record of Proceedings, 10 February 2026

**MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Hinchinbrook By-Election; Traeger Electorate, Floods**

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (2.56 pm): Because I was eagerly awaiting the birth of my fourth daughter I missed the December sittings of parliament. We had just gone through the Hinchinbrook by-election and I missed the debate on the member for Knuth's crocodile bill. This is probably a good time to comment, because hopefully the hype and tension has settled and we can address this more objectively.

I worked out that I have been working on campaigns since I was seven years old, I have rarely missed a federal or state campaign and I have never experienced the cheap, nasty, malicious campaigning that I saw at the Hinchinbrook by-election. I sincerely hope that other people in this House, from both sides, are not subjected to that sort of treatment. It is disgusting and it really erodes the integrity of government. I think some of the better, more decent members of parliament who came up seemed to be ashamed of being associated with that. There was the character assassination of candidate Mark Molachino. It was heavily focused on ruining his character. I encourage people to stay away from that in the future. We have to be better than that. We have to provide something better for the Queensland people. You can play the game—

**Mr Kempton** interjected.

**Mr KATTER:** There are stupid comments from the member for Cook. You are exactly the sort of person who would indulge in this stuff and celebrate it.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Member for Traeger, direct your comments always through the chair, please.

**Mr KEMPTON:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I take offence and ask that that be withdrawn.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Traeger, I ask you to withdraw your comment, please.

**Mr KATTER:** I withdraw. It is always difficult when someone is making commentary while we are trying to speak and deliver a sincere message. We are talking about deceit, and the crocodile bill is a good segue because we were talking about gag motions today and that was effectively another gag motion. It is a pivotal issue in North Queensland. While you can decide whether or not you believe in culling crocodiles, I would say that it was pretty deceitful to keep that from the voters during the Hinchinbrook campaign so that people could not make any judgement calls based on your delivery on that issue. That is precisely what happened.

There was a really profound statement at the end of the committee report into the crocodile bill: '... Queensland does not have a crocodile problem; Queensland has a people problem.' I guess that defines your attitude and how you feel about this. I would say that we have a crocodile problem because people who want to swim in our waterholes cannot. When working on the booth during the Hinchinbrook

campaign, many times young people came up to say, 'Mate, what are you going to do about the crocodiles because we can't swim in our swimming holes?' It really means something to a lot of people and they were denied the opportunity to vote in a way that might have generated some sort of outcome for them. The last point I should make on the Hinchinbrook by-election is that the government did not need the seat. It was not pivotal that the government win the seat so why would it go so hard and below the belt in a campaign like that? It has to be said that that was a poor reflection on the government.

The floods were a very big issue in my electorate. The government has done quite a good job of being on the ground and seeing those parts of my electorate that have been affected. There has been damage done everywhere. It is often said that the people on the ground do a tremendous job. It was especially the case in some areas where we could not get government services in. Local people did a lot of it themselves. They coordinated hay drops. It was amazing to watch communities come together after being ripped apart.

There were mixed views on some of the assistance. The SES were overzealous in Normanton and interrupted some of the great work done by the locals. The ministers were very helpful in that respect. The SES received glowing praise in Einasleigh where they were helping with clean-ups. Sometimes people who come in can do more harm than good when they are trying to help. There are a lot of losses there and a lot of repair work that needs to be done.

I think back to 2023 when Burketown was smashed and evacuated. The Running Creek, Barkly Crossing and the four creek crossings that cut off access to Burketown and Doomadgee in 2019 are still not fixed. This is due to bureaucratic red tape. It is disappointing to see the issues with the Gilbert River bridge. Over time we should be inching closer to ensuring that these places are not cut off every time there is a flood and people should not be worried about supply boats and barges and power being cut off. We should not be just going in and repairing but building resilience in the future.

*(Time expired)*