



Farmers United

A PLEA TO ALL QUEENSLANDERS

As the poet Dorothea Mackellar penned in her poem *My Country*, Australia is a country of droughts and flooding rains. Nearly all Queenslanders have experienced both these natural disasters in recent years and yet stood by each other's side - lending a helping hand.

Regional Queenslanders understand our South East Queensland and Capital City friends are currently challenged by issues such as traffic congestion, unreliable public transport and excessive childcare charges.

All Queenslanders are facing cost increases in fuel, water, electricity, rates and transport. For some of us, we can choose to trim our usage or make other sacrifices to fit our budget, but for farmers there is no choice if we want to keep our livestock alive or produce next year's crop and put food on our tables.

Right now, regional Queenslanders are under threat from a man-made disaster in the form of a Reef Water Quality improvement Bill that the Queensland State Government plans to push through the August sittings of Parliament. As farmers, we love our reef; it is part of our lifestyle and culture. We need to live and work in harmony with the reef, based on quality economic and scientific evidence. Instead the Bill, which builds on

existing water quality laws, treats farmers like criminals with maximum penalties for breaches set to increase from \$13,345 up to \$222,194.

The Science keeps claiming, to the detriment of tourism and jobs, that the Reef is dying, coral cover is reducing and that farmers are killing the Reef with fertiliser, pesticide and sediment that runs off during natural flooding events.

In our hearts and minds we know this not to be true, as does Dr Peter Ridd. His speaking tour, which began in Bundaberg on Monday is examining these and other questionable scientific claims made in the *Scientific Consensus Statement 2017* which underpins the Bill, explaining his view of the reality and providing compelling evidence to support his view.

With the State Labor conference in late August expected to pass a resolution in support of the Queensland mining industry as a major economic driver in regional communities, there is a smell of hypocrisy in the air when days earlier the State Government is expected to pass the Bill, which will adversely impact the second largest export industry - agriculture, cause financial and mental hardship to farmers, loss of productivity and huge costs

complying with red tape, force them and their families to walk away from properties that have been in the family for generations and in turn, seriously harm the viability of regional communities. There is no doubt that the Queensland State Government's Bill will have a flow on effect to all of Queensland and the Queensland economy.

All we ask is that, as a Queenslanders, you visit our Farmers United website at farmersunited.com.au and satisfy yourself that the new laws are unnecessary and then make a contribution that suits you in support of Queensland farmers who are seeking to have the Bill deferred for 2 years to enable the uncertain Science to be checked by an independent Office of Science Quality Assurance (OSQA). The OSQA concept was supported at the July LNP State Conference and was taken to Canberra by the Member for Dawson, Mr George Christensen MP.

We agree with Georgie Somerset, Agforce General President when she says "We need you to stand with us - to stand up for regional Queensland...."

**Defer the Bill
Check the Science
STOP harming Qld Farmers**

