



My response to the KAP "Reef Regulations Reversal Bill"

I will be supporting the amendments to the KAP "Reef Regulations Reversal Bill" that were moved by the LNP Shadow Minister for the Environment. My reasons are simple!

The KAP are trading in false hope!

I am proud to be a part of a cane industry family that has been part of the industry for four generations. Through my family, and through speaking with farmers and farming groups, I am well aware of the effects that LABOR's 2019 Reef Protection Amendments are having and will continue to have on farmers and the communities that rely on them.

I was raised to tell it like it is; even when it would be easier not to. The truth is the KAP Bill was never going to pass parliament, regardless of how I or the LNP voted and that is due to simple maths.

There are 93 seats in the Queensland parliament. Therefore, for a Bill to pass, it needs the support of 47 members. Labor and the Greens currently hold 54 seats.

The LNP, KAP, the Member for Mirani and the 1 Independent in the Queensland Parliament total 39 seats. In the current parliament, it is impossible to get legislation passed without the support of Labor and, in case you have been told that Labor members may support the Bill, the Queensland Parliamentary Library has advised:

"No examples of members of the ALP giving a contrary vote were identified in the period 2014 to 24 February 2022."

I'll say it again, the KAP Bill will not pass, regardless of how the LNP votes!

The KAP Bill is supported, in part, by the Environmental Defender's Office.

If you are aware of the saga surrounding the Carmichael Mine, you have probably heard of the Environmental Defender's Office or EDO. For more than five years, the EDO fought to stop the Carmichael Mine on environmental grounds for reasons including their claim that Abbott Point "borders the Great Barrier Reef".

That same group supports elements of the KAP Bill. At a public hearing into the KAP Bill, Ms Revel Pointon (lawyer) of the EDO said:

"We do support the things in the Bill that relate to implementation of an independent regulator and the discussions that are currently in place around the implementation of an independent EPA in Queensland."

So while the KAP say they want the Minister to be responsible for the regulations affecting farmers (something the LNP has been saying since 2019), their Bill would bring in an independent regulator, taking the power away from the Minister.

It must also be said that, in their submission, Canegrowers raised concerns surrounding the KAP Bill, including the reinstatement of ERMP's which, according to Canegrowers, were found by industry to be a "waste of time".

I will not support legislation that is supported in any way by the Environmental Defender's Office.

The LNP amendments EXEMPT farmers from provisions of the Environmental Regulations!

The amendments to the KAP Bill that were moved by the Shadow Environment Minister are based on face to face consultation with cane collectives, including here in the Burdekin.

The LNP's amendments would **prevent farmers accredited under a Recognised Accreditation Program (such as Smartcane BMP or alternatives) from being prosecuted.** Not just now, but into the future.

I fully acknowledge that not all farmers support Smartcane BMP and I have heard first hand of the concerns you have. That is why, in recent discussions with industry groups (including Pioneer Cane Growers, Farmers United, Ag Force and Canegrowers), I have proposed to work with them on developing an accreditation system that works for farmers, providing farmers with an **EXEMPTION from the Environmental Regulations.**

Farmers deserve protection. Not just now, but into the future!

I'm sick of the petty politics!

As a Member of Parliament, I know I will be targeted and that's fine. BUT, I will not let farmers or anyone else, be used as pawns and fed false information, especially when it's done to try and generate "likes" on social media.

On February 20th 2022, the Leader of the KAP posted on Facebook that he was heading to parliament and would be "chasing support from the Northern LNP members". Despite his claims on social media, the Leader of the KAP has not contacted me seeking support for the KAP Bill.

Here are a few more facts that the KAP leader has neglected to mention:

1. On Wednesday, September 4th 2019, I spoke on behalf of the LNP at a rally outside the regional sitting of parliament in Townsville organised by AgForce. Not one KAP member spoke at that rally.
2. On September 18th 2019, I spoke against the Environmental Protection (Great Barrier Reef Protection Measures) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill; the Bill that introduced the so-called "Reef Regs".
3. On September 19th 2019, I voted against the Environmental Protection (Great Barrier Reef Protection Measures) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. So did all

members of the LNP, all members of the KAP, the Member for Mirani and the Member for Whitsunday. Due to Labor's majority, the Bill was passed on that day.

I spent more than 25 years in a Police uniform. I know what it's like to have difficult conversations and I know that people will not always agree with me. BUT, I will always front up for those conversations, no matter how tough they are.

It's a real pity that, instead of targeting the LABOR government that introduced this draconian legislation, the KAP chooses to attack me. They are doing exactly what LABOR wants them to do by dividing our community and they are doing it by only telling part of the story.

Maybe the KAP should explain why they are doing Labor's dirty work!



Here to help

If you or someone you know has an issue that you need help with, please remember my job is to represent you. I may not always be able to fix the problem... but rest assured I will always do my best.

If you need assistance, please email burdekin@parliament.qld.gov.au or call 1800 817 594.
