

22 March 2018

Reference: SA:RC 220318

Hon Anastacia Palaszczuk
Premier of Queensland
thepremier@premiers.qld.gov.au

Office of the Mayor – Cr Rachel Chambers

Dear Premier

Since the announcement of the committee for the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Bill 2018 just two weeks ago, Queensland farmers have sought to understand both the desired intent of this bill and also its subsequent effects on Queensland.

What is evident is that there is a lot of people rushing to produce a substantial submission to the committee, due to the very short time frame given. What is crystal clear is that there hasn't not been enough time spent understanding this bill and its effects on the entire state of Queensland.

It is my belief that you think you, as Premier are doing the right thing, however giving the very people who have been actively managing their land for their livelihoods for generations, only six weeks to share their understandings and insight with you in order to ascertain the best way forward, is quite frankly offensive.

Agricultural Producers work the land, that's what they do. They rely on the quality of their land for their prosperity. No one cares more about vegetation management than primary producers. Out here, away from the city we value nature; we value the bees which pollinate our crops, we value the bugs which keep pests at bay, we value rain more than anyone may be able to comprehend and we certainly value good management of our land.

We have taken care of land for generations and will continue to do so. The unfortunate thing is, farming by its very nature (needing acreage) means we will never have enough heads or voting hands around the table with a thorough and comprehensive understanding of our issues. The understanding of parliament which represents the entirety of Queenslanders regardless of their political viewpoints comes from listening to people and seeking to understand the issues which surround them.

Politics is about the next generation. What we have now, is a shared concern and passion for delivering clean, prosperous and sustainable environments for this generation and those who follow.

In your maiden speech back in 2006, you informed the Queensland people that you will continue to argue a point that you believe has merit and put forward a solution to an issue that may not be popular.

Well Premier, as a Mayor I also share your passion for exchanging points of view. Even though it may be uncomfortable, it is this friction and diversity of opinions which lead to the best outcomes. In this case, it is the argument which is the very thing this bill is missing.

My region is a primary producing land, that's what we do, we do it really well and we've been doing it for many generations. Please don't be fooled into thinking that any changes to us won't have changes to you and your people.

Whilst you are rightfully concerned about your population doubling in 15 years in Ipswich, we share these concerns/opportunities by planning our businesses (farms) around this data. By 2050 food production is said to need to double to meet population demand. It perplexes us as to why you are not supporting agriculture in 2018 by offering solid policies around its sustainable growth. Agriculture is the fastest growing industry in Queensland and globally Agricultural and Gastronomic Tourism is increasing in popularity year to year as consumers are wanting to discover more about where their food is coming from, and more importantly how it is sustained.

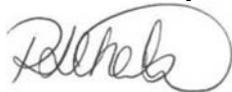
You won't find a Primary Producer who disagrees with the need for sustainable vegetation management and you won't find a Queenslander who doesn't like to eat.

I think if we had the chance to actually sit down together and fully understand each other's points of view and aspirations, we may actually be able to work out a way forward keeping all of Queensland's best interests on the table.

As an advocate for the North Burnett I am respectfully requesting an extension to the consultation time in relation to the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Bill 2018. During this time, we would seek to understand the information (data) which has brought your government to the understanding that this Bill would be in the best interests of the State of Queensland and conversely we hope you would seek to understand our information (data) which makes us believe this bill, as is, would be of great detriment to this State.

I look forward to your response.

Yours faithfully,



Cr Rachel Chambers
Mayor

