

~~table the bill and explanatory notes. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.~~

~~Tabled paper: Restoring Fairness for Government Workers Bill 2013~~

~~Tabled paper: Restoring Fairness for Government Workers Bill 2013, explanatory notes.~~

~~<The Restoring Fairness for Government Workers >Bill seeks to repair one of the most fundamental breaches of trust perpetrated by the Liberal National Party on government workers in Queensland. On 4 April 2011, soon after becoming leader of the LNP, Campbell Newman declared, 'The Public Service has nothing to fear from me'. However, within six months of winning the election, the Newman LNP government betrayed many government workers by wielding its massive majority and removing a range of employment conditions that helped ensure an impartial Public Service. Those provisions included protections against contracting out, employment security provisions, organisational change provisions and termination, change and redundancy provisions. The Newman government also watered down the independence of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission.~~

~~We now know why the Newman government made those changes. It was to make it easier to sack 14,000 government workers, including front-line staff such as nurses, doctors and teachers, and to slash services. Today, the Newman government did not rule out cutting even more jobs in next month's budget. Last year in this chamber we witnessed the extraordinary situation when, without warning, the Attorney-General introduced a raft of late changes. At the time, the opposition described the move as disgraceful and the passage of time has not at all altered our view.~~

~~Those changes were made by the Newman government without consultation or prior notice and were in direct contravention of guarantees made by Campbell Newman prior to the 2012 state election. In the interests of hard-working government staff in this state, the opposition has introduced the Restoring Fairness for Government Workers Bill. This bill seeks to restore the industrial conditions that were negotiated between the state government and public sector employees and their unions before the cold-hearted and callous actions of the Newman government. The bill seeks to restore agreed industrial conditions in enterprise bargaining agreements. There is no fairness in a legislative framework that allows for agreed industrial conditions to be overridden at the stroke of a pen. The bill also makes changes to restore independence to the Industrial Relations Commission.~~

~~The Labor opposition's bill will restore the conditions for government workers that were stripped away. Those conditions acknowledge the professionalism of government workers and ensure that the Public Service has the freedom to provide the government with frank and fearless advice. Despite his half-baked attempts to crush unions, the labour movement is alive and well and, right across Queensland, we will march together this Sunday, the real Labor Day, to show the Premier exactly what workers think of his government. I commend the bill to the House.>~~

First Reading

~~Ms PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.34 pm): I move—~~

~~That the bill be now read a first time.~~

~~Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.~~

~~Motion agreed to.~~

~~Bill read a first time.~~

Referral to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

~~Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Cunningham): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.~~

<MILK PRICING (FAIR MILK MARK) BILL

Introduction

~~ Mr KNUTH (Dalrymple—KAP) (2.34 pm): <I present a bill for an act to provide for the setting of a fair price to be paid for the production of milk and to establish a fair milk mark to assist consumers to purchase milk for which a fair price has been paid to dairy farmers. >I table the explanatory notes. I nominate the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee to consider the bill.~~

~~Tabled paper: Milk Pricing(Fair Milk Mark) Bill 2013.~~

Tabled paper: Milk Pricing (Fair Milk Mark) Bill 2013, explanatory notes.

It is with great honour that I present the Milk Pricing (Fair Milk Mark) Bill 2013 to the house. The dairy industry is one of Queensland's leading rural industries. It employs about 4,500 people, with 2,700 people on farm, and contributes \$1 billion ex-factory to the state economy. For 2012-13, the gross value of milk production is forecast at \$230 million, with an expected decline in production of six to eight per cent. In 2000, there were 1,545 dairy farms in Queensland. In 2010, there were 610. That number has dropped below 540 and likely will be below 500 by the end of 2013. Reports indicate that up to 50 farmers have left the industry since the supermarket duopoly began a price war over store-label fresh milk, with more farmers forecast to leave the industry due to unviable returns.

This is merely the continuation of a steady trend of decline since the deregulation of the Australian dairy industry in 2001. Deregulation has resulted in great personal cost and increased debt burden. With continued downward pressure on farm-gate prices, production declines have continued with no statutory intervention to restore the competitive imbalance.

Considering the Queensland dairy industry is reliant on a domestic fresh milk market, the need for legislative reform and statutory controls is greater than in southern states with a large export industry. There is growing consumer awareness that the market power of the retail duopoly is a real threat to Queensland's milk supply chain and to the production of fresh milk in Queensland.

The Milk Pricing (Fair Milk Mark) Bill 2013 introduces a non-compulsory marketing mechanism to: address the competitive imbalance created by deregulation and unethical marketing practices of the supermarket duopoly; give consumers the opportunity to express their support of our domestic dairy industry; outline a program of ministerial consultation with other state jurisdictions to introduce similar legislative instruments to ensure the Queensland dairy industry is not disadvantaged by increased trans-border trade; and legislate an ethical market for fresh milk in the Queensland dairy supply chain.

The bill will introduce a fair milk mark for all milk that is sold in Queensland where the farmer is paid at least 8c per litre above the cost of production. I seek leave to incorporate the remainder of my speech in *Hansard*.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Cunningham): Order! Prior approval has been granted by Madam Speaker.

Leave granted.

The bill will introduce a penalty system for any milk that is sold in Queensland bearing a Fair Milk Mark for which the farmer has been paid less than 8c per litre over the cost of production.

Without the re-regulation of the Queensland dairy industry and the introduction of a mandatory minimum arbitrated farm-gate price for milk, there is no other way to achieve the policy objectives.

This bill is simple: it creates a Fair Milk Mark placed on a milk container that identifies where the farmer is paid at least 8c per litre above the cost of production.

When a consumer goes to purchase a bottle of milk, the Fair Milk Mark on that bottle clearly identifies that our dairy farmer has been paid a fair milk price.

While arbitration is proven to be the most effective way to negotiate the farm-gate price, deregulation has placed a noose around the negotiation table.

The Fair Milk Mark will help restore the viability of this valuable industry, rebuild confidence and keep our farmers doing what they know best, and that is to provide fresh milk for Queenslanders. >

First Reading

Mr KNUTH (Dalrymple—KAP) (2.37 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Cunningham): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee.