



Speech By
Mark Robinson

MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND

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**MOTION: NORTH STRADBROKE ISLAND PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABILITY
LEGISLATION**

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Cleveland—LNP) (6.10 pm): I rise to support the shadow minister's motion for more time to allow the economic transition strategy and the workforce transition plan to be thoroughly considered by the Finance and Administration Committee.

AWU state secretary Ben Swan labelled the Stradbroke decision as 'a kick in the guts' for workers. He revealed the reason behind the government's bill when he said—

This decision speaks more to the soy milk latte sipping politics of Paddington and West End in inner city Brisbane than it does to the Government's stated objective of supporting jobs and sustainable resource development throughout Queensland.

Queensland Resources Council boss Michael Roche said he had raised with both the Premier and the environment minister industry concerns that a 2019 end to sandmining on the island was unachievable. He said—

... there was simply no way that the Government could come up with a plan that replaces by 2019 the hundreds of jobs and the \$130 million annual economic injection from sand mining.

While I agree that the government's bill is a bad one, this motion is about the consequences of the government's bill to the workers, families and people of NSI. The motion is about planning the transition for the workers, their families and the whole island population, and more time is needed for the committee to consider that transition. QRC's Michael Roche linked the bills and the ETS when he said—

Premature closure of the mine and an inadequate economic transition strategy will be a sure recipe for a social and economic disaster for the Stradbroke Island community.

Mr Speaker, you cannot separate the bill from its consequences. If the ETS is not done well, there will be devastation. The very least that the government can do is to grant considerably more time—not the time that the minister has put forward today—to do more work on its ETS and WTP. The government does not want the truth to come out about how devastating its bill will be. The government has used mushroom management on the people of North Stradbroke Island, the committee and parliament. This Labor government has treated us all like mushrooms—kept us all in the dark and fed us crap. We have all been kept in the dark.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Cleveland, I think those words are unparliamentary. I ask you to withdraw.

Dr ROBINSON: I withdraw. No regulatory impact statement was done, so no-one knows for sure what we are dealing with. A RIS report would have been a public document and the full picture of how many hundreds of jobs lost, the depth of the economic recession that is coming, and the social and

Indigenous impacts would have been visible to the public. The government's Green folly, betrayal of the workers and widening the gap of Indigenous disadvantage on Close the Gap Day would have been on display for all to see.

The fact is that the government does not want all this information known. That has bewildered key stakeholders whose businesses and workers will be severely affected if the ETS is botched. Straddie Chamber of Commerce President, Colin Battersby, said—

I run my business with facts and figures ... I am mystified as to why there would be no analysis of where we are now and where we want to go and then we would come up with a transition strategy ... I did not get the opportunity to have that input early on.

Similarly, SeaLink CEO, David Thomson, said—

... as part of the due diligence that SeaLink—

which was Straddie Ferries—

went through that question was asked of me ... by various SeaLink accountants, lawyers and whatever—'Dave, where's the economic rationale from the government for this change?' and I could not give it to them. We had to use our own numbers, extrapolate them, give them our best forecast ...

Without an RIS the government is flying blind and, like a category 5 cyclone, it cannot be sure how bad the devastation is going to be. The government has tried to limit the committee's terms of reference—they are limited to the bills only but not their impact. How ridiculous! That is why the committee's terms of reference must be expanded to include both the ETS and the workers transition plan—which Ben Swan is very unhappy about, by the way, Minister, and he is going to the Fair Work Commission about it; congratulations, Minister.

Further, the government separately conducted research on the island by doing an extensive survey, but when the committee requested the report they were denied it. They needed that information to make a fully informed decision, and I ask again for the minister to release that secret report.

In conclusion, you may ask why is the government bringing mining to an end in 2019? The QRC hit the nail on the head. They said—

As recent news of resource sector job losses have surely demonstrated, Queensland cannot afford the luxury of pandering to a Greens demand to shut down a mining operation supporting hundreds of jobs on North Stradbroke Island and adjacent communities.

I support the shadow minister's motion.

(Time expired)