



Speech By
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ADJOURNMENT

North Stradbroke Island, Economic Transition Strategy

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Cleveland—LNP) (11.15 pm): I rise to speak about the government's North Stradbroke Island economic transition strategy. It saddens me to report early sackings and local confusion resulting from Labor's green laws to prematurely shut down sandmining. The government made a decision, introduced a law without a plan and then decided afterwards how to deal with the fallout. Instead of 'ready, set, go' Straddie got 'go, set, not ready'. Against the will of the people, Straddie got an early shutdown of mining at a cost of 150 mining and mining related jobs plus an expected 150 other local jobs put at risk. Labor's ETS is an inadequately funded and poorly focused Green preference payback deal. The workers' assistance package is also inadequate according to Ben Swan, state secretary of the Australian Workers' Union. To add insult to injury, the government recently lumped two pre-existing LNP projects together, Toondah Harbour and Weinam Creek, added them to their failing Straddie ETS and called it a Moreton Bay plan.

It gives me no joy today to inform the parliament that sadly just a few weeks ago 30 Sibelco miners were sacked and the whole mining community advised that there would be an extended Christmas shutdown. Clearly this is not the Christmas that mining families on Straddie expected. My office was approached by some of the sacked workers saying that they had problems accessing information about the workers' assistance scheme, which is the scheme that is supposed to transition mine workers into other employment. My office contacted Treasury, who said that it was no longer their responsibility. We were sent to the office of the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines who said, 'It is not us. Try employment.' Next my office contacted the office of the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, but the minister's office had no idea about the sacked workers and they were 'still finalising the package'. We have 30 workers who were sacked well over four weeks ago, and they are still 'finalising the package'. Workers further told us that the promised government office had not been set up on Straddie. Through word of mouth some of the redundant workers found out that there is now someone at the Little Ship Club waiting for the office to be established. There is a glossy brochure called *North Stradbroke Island: sandmining workers assistance scheme* with all sorts of promises that are not helping anyone.

In conclusion, the whole process is a shambles and it is the workers and island residents who are suffering. What is needed is immediate assistance for the first 30 sacked workers, more funding for the ETS and better focus on the ETS and tourism-boosting projects like the Dunwich Harbour redevelopment, destination marketing and the *HMS Tobruk* as a new dive site. Labor broke it; now Labor must fix it.