

Good morning

I am sure by now you have heard that the *Sugar Industry (Arbitration For Mill Owners and Sugar marketing Entities) Amendment Bill*, introduced by the LNP Opposition on Wednesday night was defeated. This result occurred after a tense voting process that had many dramatic twists and turns. I wanted to take this opportunity to explain what happened in Parliament on Wednesday night as there has been a lot of rumour and innuendo as to what occurred.

At the end of the second reading debate, the Bill was supported on the second reading by the LNP, KAP, ONP and the Member for Cook. It was opposed on the second reading by Labor and the Member for Cairns. This was a curious result, as the Member for Cairns and the Member for Cook both voted a different way yesterday on the urgency motion.

The Member for Cook then took a matter of privilege and advised the Speaker that he had made an error and intended to vote with Labor, not with the LNP. The Speaker ruled that his vote would stand as it was and so the Bill stood agreed to at its second reading.

The parliament then considered the clauses of the Bill. At the end of this process, the Bill was voted on at its third reading. The Bill was supported by the LNP, KAP and ONP. It was opposed on its third reading by Labor, the Member for Cairns and the Member for Cook. This meant there was a tied vote. The Speaker has a casting vote in this situation. The Speaker voted with Labor.

As such the Bill failed to pass. I worked throughout the week to secure the votes of the crossbench MPs. I had secured the support of KAP and ONP and had an undertaking from the Members for Cairns and Cook that they would support our position. The Member for Cairns had publicly declared that he would vote with the LNP, but did not do so. The Member for Cook, having voted with the LNP in December 2015, switched sides on this occasion.

The debate was at times heated and the performance of the Minister for Agriculture, Bill Byrne, was nothing short of disgraceful. The Queensland LNP has done everything it possibly could to deliver this outcome in a timely fashion for cane growers in Queensland, including those in the Burdekin electorate. I reiterate my position that I will continue to fight for the best interests of Burdekin growers involved in this dispute.

*Note: At the time of writing this email I have been advised that Wilmar and QSL have reached in principal agreement regarding this dispute and I am encouraged that we may finally have a resolution to this issue.*

Regards

Dale

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