



## **Reef Regulations report condemned**

The Queensland Farmers' Federation (QFF) and industry members have condemned a Parliamentary Committee recommendation that a Bill enabling restrictive Reef catchment regulations should be enacted into law without changes.

Despite holding regional meetings following continued pressure from QFF, industry members and other groups, the Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee has not listened to the farming community.

QFF President Stuart Armitage said the proposed Reef regulations would see a greater regulatory burden placed on Queensland's farmers while not guaranteeing any benefits for the Great Barrier Reef.

"The government has not conducted a proper analysis on how effective the current Reef protection regulations, which have been in place for nearly 10 years, have been to date, how much they have cost to implement and enforce, or the benefits they have delivered to the Reef or agriculture," Mr Armitage said.

"Fundamentally, without this analysis and understanding it is not possible to demonstrate whether increasing regulations will realise the expected benefits for the Reef."

"Agriculture has been and remains committed to doing its bit for the Reef with an

exponential increase of farmer participation in Best Management Practice and other voluntary practice improvement programs.”

“These programs are making huge improvements to the quality of the water leaving the farm and significantly contributing to the health of the Reef despite the water quality targets being highly ambitious and grossly underfunded.”

Mr Armitage said the situation brought into question whether the basic mechanics of our Parliamentary process were fit for purpose.

“The committees are our ‘house of review’. They must be able to genuinely review legislation and put forward informed recommendations to improve law making in the interests of all Queenslanders,” Mr Armitage said.

QFF acknowledges the non-government members of the Committee who submitted a dissenting report and thank them for showing a better understanding of this complex issue, due government process and for their support.

**ENDS**

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**ONLINE QFF STATEMENT**

