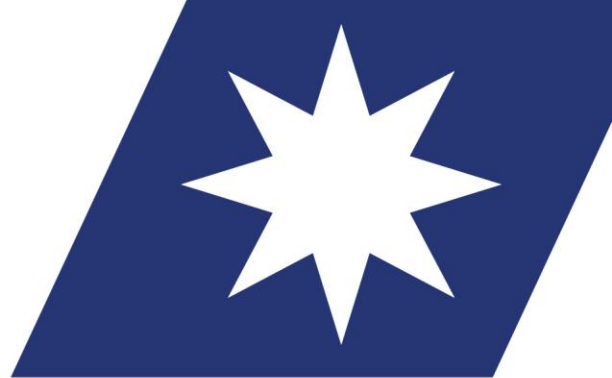


ROBBIE KATTER

Member for Traeger

MEDIA RELEASE



February 14, 2019

A 'GLIMMER OF HOPE' AS GOV BACKS BUSH PUBS

A "glimmer of hope" for rural Queensland communities that have been bludgeoned by floods and years of drought could be delivered by the passing of the KAP's Liquor (Rural Hotels Concession) Amendment Bill 2018, State KAP Leader and Traeger MP Robbie Katter has said.

Responding to an article published in the *Courier Mail* on the weekend, Mr Katter said he was relieved on behalf of the bush to learn that the State Government would pass the legislation.

The KAP bill will reduce annual licence fees for "very remote" pubs so they are no longer paying the same as their inner-city counterparts – bringing the yearly fee of \$3,757 down to \$376.

Mr Katter said he supported the news that the Government would extend the legislation to clubs.

In total 112 pubs and 42 clubs will benefit from the change under Labor's amendments.

Mr Katter sought leave from Parliament this week to remain in his electorate to support producers and communities in the midst of one of Australia's worst ever flooding disasters.

Producers in the North West are predicting stock losses of up to half a million, which could equate to around \$500 million in lost income and costs incurred overall.

The Traeger MP said while his focus was on the ongoing crisis, the Government's support of the KAP bill was welcome.

"The passing of this legislation is, in the scheme of things, a minute policy change for the State Government," he said.

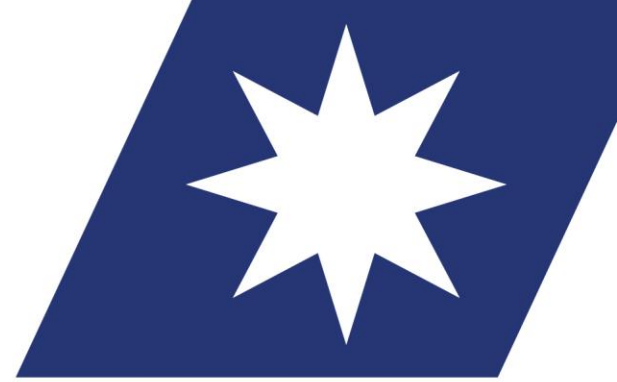
"But the actual effect it will have on the ground in my electorate and all remote electorates across Queensland is significant.

"In the bush, the pub is not just a business – it's a community meeting place and a central point of contact for those who face isolation on a day to day basis.

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"On Monday when I was in Julia Creek, many of those producers shattered by what's gone on during the past week met at the Gannon's Hotel to sit together, unload their thoughts and just offer some support to one another.

"Many people talk about the importance of looking after mental health in the bush – one of the simplest ways to do this is to make sure people can come together and have a drink or a talk at their local.

"This can't happen if pubs can't afford to stay open."

Mr Katter said rising operating costs in the face of unavoidably low patronage due to the isolation faced in remote areas had threatened the viability of bush pubs in recent years, with many having already been forced to close their doors.

"Time and time again I have been told the annual licencing fee was one of many overheads that publicans just found impossible to pay," he said.

"For many, these changes will come too late but for those pubs we still have I trust this will be very welcome."

Mr Katter thanked the Palaszczuk Government in advance for supporting the bill.

—ENDS—

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