

BOB KATTER

Katter's Australian Party

Federal Member for Kennedy



MEDIA RELEASE

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Katter and FNQ Elders unite to fight for First Australians' rights

KAP Leader and Federal Member for Kennedy Bob Katter joined with Far North First Australian Elders today to call on the State Government to stop ignoring the interests of First Australians.

Flanked by Elders from Hope Vale, Coen and Mossman Gorge from the Family Responsibilities Commission (FRC), Mr Katter challenged the State Government's plans to dismantle the FRC, just days after criticising the Government for prioritising Brisbane over Cairns to house the First Nations Culture Centre.

Unlike the Federal Government, which will fund the FRC for three years, the State Government has not committed money beyond next year, leaving the FRC in the dark and its future under a cloud.

"The KAP, I'll discuss with the state blokes, but I'm pretty sure they will be moving in the State Parliament on this issue and I would hope that the LNP and Crossbenchers will join us in that initiative," Mr Katter said.

He echoed the calls of the FRC to empower communities to lead themselves.

"It's simply a matter of whether you believe decisions should be made by people themselves up here in North Queensland or whether decisions should be made without any consultation by people in Brisbane – it's a very simple proposition that we're putting before the people."

He also highlighted the costs of detention to the wider community.

"We will point out that every one of these children that falls into trouble costs the people of Queensland \$560,000 per child per year."

The FRC and Elders called on Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Partnerships Jackie Trad to step aside and let Cape York First Nations lead their own communities.

"She is out of touch and holding Cape York reform leaders back by refusing to commit to three years of ongoing funding put on the table by the Commonwealth Government six months ago," they said.

They added the funding empowered local leaders to support community members facing complex problems on an unimaginable scale; some of the country's most disadvantaged people.

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“Courageous Cape York community leaders have built a ‘tough love’ approach to make sure their people are taking responsibility for their children, sending them to school, got money to put food on the table and keeping them safe from harm.”

At today’s press conference, FRC Commissioner from Hope Vale Doreen Hart said independence was vitally important.

“We need to have solutions our own way and do things our own way,” she said.

The FRC Commissioners criticised the Governments for using Indigenous people as political footballs and welcomed Mr Katter’s intervention.

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