

ROBBIE KATTER

Member for Traeger



MEDIA RELEASE

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RENEWED FOCUS ON NORTH WEST A SIGN OF GOOD TIMES

A new era of prosperity for the North West Minerals Province (NWMP) is imminent following renewed interest and investment in the vastly mineral-rich region, State KAP Leader and Traeger MP Robbie Katter has said.

Mr Katter was one of several keynote speakers to address a packed forum on Tuesday morning, as part of the *Townsville Bulletin Business Breakfast: The Future of the North West Minerals Province* session, run by Townsville Enterprise.

Other speakers included CopperString 2.0 project director John O'Brien, Townsville State MP Scott Stewart, Federal Senator Susan McDonald and Federal Water Resources Minister David Littleproud.

The forum coincided with announcements made by State Development Minister, Cameron Dick, to boost the North West region, namely committing \$1.18 million to Copperstring 2.0 to support its \$1 billion project that will connect the region to the National Energy Market.

The State Government has also promised \$500,000 towards developing opportunities for new common-user electricity infrastructure.

Mr Katter said he believed the events of the week signalled a renewed focus on the North West in Townsville and Brisbane.

"The TEL forum has ignited prosperous times for the North West Mineral Province and Townsville; the fact that Townsville has held this event recognising the North West is really positive and will inject confidence in our economy, business sector, real estate market and community," he said.

"None of this has been news to anyone in the North West, but it is significant that Townsville is finally waking up to see how much they need us to go ahead.

"One aspect of discussion during the forum was about the need to acknowledge prosperity for Townsville doesn't go north and south, it goes east to west – this is significant.

"Kevin Gill, Chairman of Townsville Enterprise, also reminded us this week that we only need to remember the boom that occurred in Townsville on the back of the opening of the Carpentaria gas line in the 1990s.

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"This was followed by the opening of Cannington Mine, Century Mine and Phosphate Hill.

"People would do well to recall what this did for their community and the economic stimulant it created – this is what I believe the North West can do again in the coming years."

Mr Katter said it was important North Queensland recognised that the NWMP was far more central to its economy and future than stand-alone enterprises such as the Carmichael Mine and Queensland Nickel, which have commanded most of the media's attention in recent times.

"The reality is that Townsville is a much bigger beneficiary of the NWMP than any of these other projects that people are always up in arms about," he said.

"After many years of lobbying, I need to acknowledge and thank the various leaders – including our State Development Minister Cameron Dick and local North West mayors and MITEZ - who have all been part of the movement and genuine recognition we are now seeing."

Mr Katter said he believed this week's State Government announcement could be the trigger for progress and expansion of various projects in the North West, which would mean excellent outcomes for jobs and the North's economy.

"I will be reporting back to the local councils and other groups in my electorate to ensure we engage more heavily in Townsville in the future and align our priorities," he said.

"This is the start of something big, and I am confident there are good times to come off the back of all this."

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Media inquiries: Morgan Oss, 0428 772 544