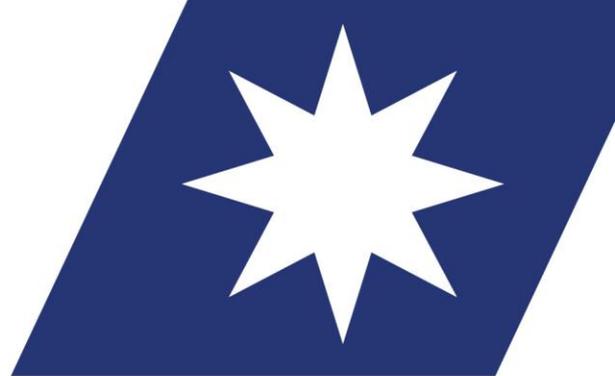


ROBBIE KATTER

Member for Traeger



MEDIA RELEASE

September 9, 2019

OLYMPIC BID ANOTHER TAX ON THE REGIONS

Brisbane's bid to host the 2032 Olympic Games is an example of "gross political gluttony" and further proof that the people of Queensland cannot afford the Palaszczuk Government, State KAP Leader and Traeger MP Robbie Katter has said.

Mr Katter said the Premier's potential Olympic bid, which ramped up this week as she and a "high-powered delegation" meet with International Olympic Committee president Thomas Bach in Switzerland, was truly a slap in the face to all Queenslanders living outside the south east.

He said rural and regional Queenslanders were looking for leaders who could help give them water security, drive down spiralling power prices and genuinely address rising crime rates – not ones who while away taxpayers' money on glitzy events without a second thought.

"Last week, we had the Government in Townsville preaching about how important the North and the regions are to the state, but it seems this focus was all but forgotten as the Members got on their flights back to Brisbane," Mr Katter said.

"Essentially through this bid the State Government is committing itself to spending money on an event and on infrastructure that those of us outside the south east will never see or benefit from – how that is a 'regions-friendly' policy is beyond me.

"We have drought across most of the state, bushfires still burning and communities still reeling from the unprecedented floods of January, and our Premier's focus is on putting on the Olympic Games.

"Something is very wrong here."

Mr Katter said Queensland had recently enjoyed its time on the world stage, having hosted the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games in 2018.

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"The Commonwealth Games cost the state billions of dollars but largely the only benefit provided was to that host city," he said.

"Further I'm told the latest Olympics in Rio blew out its budget at \$13 billion¹.

"In Queensland we are soon to be sitting on about \$90 billion total debt, so it will be interesting to see where this sort of money will be plucked from if we are successful for 2032 – probably mining royalties.

"According to our State Government we can't afford more money to address the drought, or funding for vital infrastructure like dams, but we can most certainly afford to host the Olympic Games."

Hinchinbrook MP Nick Dametto said a potential Olympics bid should not be the government's focus.

"This kind of south-east centric self-indulgence provides yet another reason for voters to turn away from the major parties and towards Katter's Australian Party, where we put the interests of the rural and regional Queenslanders first," he said.

"As far as I'm concerned, any money spent on a potential bid would be put to better use in the regions where the population has felt incredibly neglected by this State Labor Government."

Mr Dametto said an overpass at North Shore, financial support for the proposed Ingham bio-energy mill, a dam on the Herbert River and dredging Cardwell's One Mile Creek and Lucinda's Enterprise Channel were all examples of projects in his electorate where money would be better spent than on an Olympics bid.

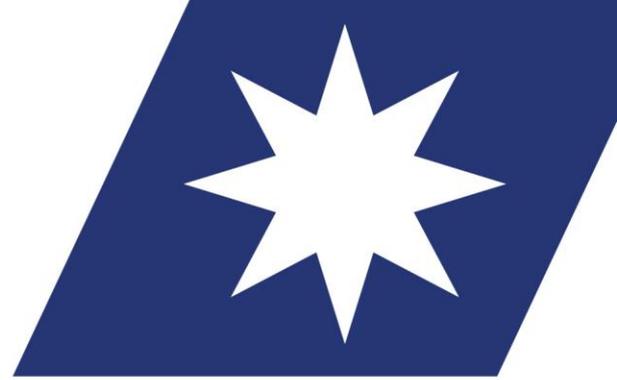
"If there's one lesson Labor should have learnt after their shellacking at this year's Federal Election, it was that you ignore rural and regional Queensland at your peril," he said.

¹ Reuters, "Rio 2016 price tag rises to \$13.2 billion", June 15, 2017,

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-olympics-brazil-cost/rio-2016-price-tag-rises-to-13-2-billion-idUSKBN19539C>

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Mr Katter called on the Opposition to stand up for rural and regional Queensland, and oppose the Premier's 2032 bid.

"It would be great if the LNP – which so often claims to be a true friend to the regions and the bush - went 'radical' and opposed this Olympics bid as well," he said.

—ENDS—

Media inquiries: Morgan Oss, 0428 772 544