

NICK DAMETTO
Member for Hinchinbrook



MEDIA RELEASE

5/12/2019

Modern govt lacks Sir Joh's vision

HINCHINBROOK MP Nick Dametto has evoked the spirit of former Premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen by highlighting the consecutive failures of State and Federal Governments to deliver any vital nation-building infrastructure in Queensland over the past 30 years.

"Sir Joh wasn't perfect by any means, but you can't deny that when it came to big ticket projects that would benefit generations of Queenslanders, he got things done," Mr Dametto said.

"These days I fear there is too much power with bureaucrats who will find every reason under the sun not to build things like dams, power stations or marine infrastructure.

"Government Ministers then use "advice from their Department" as the excuse for not progressing with these sorts of projects instead of showing some initiative and actually delivering for the people."

Mr Dametto listed Wivenhoe and Burdekin dams, the Gateway Bridge and the electrification and modernisations of the Queensland Rail network as just some of Sir Joh's landmark achievements during his time as premier.

"Sir Joh was able to build this state because of his ability to see through the unnecessary hold-ups of departmental procedures. Modern day bureaucracy has stacked up to the point where even after a Minister announces a project, years and millions of dollars are wasted without any tangible outcome," Mr Dametto said.

"For example, in the last 30 years, Australia has chewed up hundreds of millions of dollars in feasibility studies on water infrastructure projects, yet we have not built one single dam. It comes back to vision. Not short-term fixes, but long-term infrastructure investment that keeps places like the North strong.

"Katter's Australian Party (KAP) is built on the old Country Party values and we will continue to advocate for developing regional Queensland to see the full potential realised in not only the bush but in our coastal cities across North Queensland. Place like Cairns and Townsville will continue to flounder as nothing more than big regional towns unless truly visionary projects are undertaken."

Mr Dametto also highlighted the achievements of the Bjelke-Petersen government in other policy areas, such as introducing stamp duty concessions for small businesses, family property transfer, first home buyers and mortgages.

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"These policies helped both reduce the cost of doing business in Queensland and the cost of living, giving people a reason to cross the border and move to our state," Mr Dametto said.

"The KAP's proposal to expand the First Home Owners' Grant to existing homes in regional areas carries on this legacy as we recognise affordable homes are key to keeping families in rural and regional towns across this state."

Mr Dametto said if the KAP found itself in a position of power to help form government after next year's State election, the party would be pushing for the development of several key infrastructure projects in the North.

"Future funding for the dredging of One Mile Creek at Cardwell and the construction of the North Queensland Bio-Energy plant will be just some of the projects on my hit list for Hinchinbrook if we find ourselves in that situation after the election," Mr Dametto said.

"But that's just a drop in the ocean. We need to see projects like Hells Gates Dam, the North Johnstone transfer, a state-owned rail line into the Galilee Basin and Copper String 2.0 come to fruition.

"It is imperative Queenslanders back a party that continues to drive growth and prosperity in our state for generations to come."

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Photo Caption

Katter's Australian Party leader and Kennedy MP Bob Katter with Hughenden Irrigation Project Corporation chairman Shane McCarthy earlier this year.

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