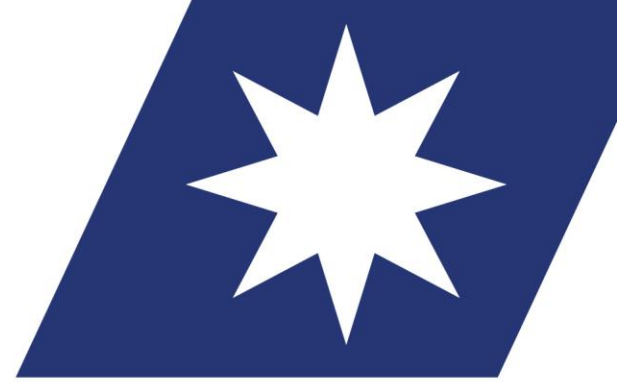


ROBBIE KATTER

Member for Traeger

MEDIA RELEASE



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Robbie Katter MP

Member for Traeger, Katter's Australian Party Leader

Op-Ed

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GOVERNMENT BARRIERS BLOCK ETHANOL BENEFITS

With Australia's fuel security under increasing threat, and farmers paying double for fuel and fertiliser, excuses are running out for government inaction on developing Queensland's biofuels capacity.

The propping-up of Australia's two existing oil refineries is just maintaining the status quo; what we really need is a nation-wide biofuels mandate and a ban on oil exports, with that oil instead refined exclusively in Australian-owned and operated plants.

Successive governments have failed to prioritise the industry and enforce compliance with the four per cent ethanol mandate, costing regional Queensland untold numbers of jobs and economic opportunities, including stalled biofuel plants in the Burdekin, Ingham and in my own patch out at Pentland.

Farmers and millers want to invest in producing ethanol but say there's no money in it, and they're right.

The recently unveiled Sugar Plus vision and roadmap developed by the sugar industry and Queensland's Department of Agriculture and Fisheries recognises sugar cane's value to the bioeconomy boom but neglects to put ethanol production front and centre.

It prioritises the industry's role in feeding the world, followed by producing energy, followed by fabricating sustainable products, but ethanol production must take immediate precedence.

Australia needs to take a leaf out of India's book, where ethanol is being considered a "game changer".

The government there has committed to green energy and bankers and oil companies have paid up, with ethanol helping slash the country's independence of mostly-imported fossil fuels.

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Here in Queensland, the Palaszczuk Labor Government isn't even ensuring that major fuel companies and retailers are obeying the four per cent ethanol mandate – the compliance rate is a dismal 2.9 per cent.

The KAP is working to re-visit and hopefully strengthen the ethanol mandate at the State-level as we speak.

In a perfect world, we'd have a nation-wide mandate in place as well as waste-to-diesel technology, Australian-made electric vehicles for metropolitan public servants, and a ban on oil exports, which is all in the proposed Sovereign Fuel Security Bill being spearheaded by my father Bob Katter.

The plan would make Australia 80 per cent self-sufficient in fuel, rather than the current status quo which is ad hoc, insufficient and poses us to huge sovereign risk.

Unfortunately, it's not a perfect world and common sense is becoming less and less common in Canberra, so we must continue to agitate on this issue at every angle.

—ENDS—

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