



## MEDIA RELEASE

26 September 2022

# What regional Australia needs from Jobs and Skills body – key recommendations

THE Federal Government received a clear-cut reminder as to why regional and remote Australia deserves a legislative voice in the proposed Jobs and Skills body with Kennedy MP Bob Katter articulating North Queensland's desperate workforce needs.

Mr Katter, with Independent Member for Indi, Helen Haines, advocated and supported an amendment to the Government's initial bill by adding an integral function to Jobs and Skills Australia - to provide advice to the Minister in relation to skills and training and workforce needs in regional, remote and rural Australia. The [Jobs and Skills Australia Bill 2022](#) was passed in the House of Representatives on Monday.

Mr Katter said the labour shortage in parts of Kennedy and the north had become so dire he was preparing to meet the Minister for defence personnel and request the army be deployed to assist industries such as sugar during an "emergency situation".

"We have a shortage of 10 truck drivers that we simply cannot hire to take sugar cane from Mareeba to the Mossman Mill," Mr Katter said.

"And if we can't find those drivers, then that cane will rot in the field and not only will the farmer lose their income from that cane, but also have the cost of disposing that cane.

"Doctors - we've got no doctor at Mission Beach, we have no doctor at Julia Creek, we have no doctor at Cardwell. We're in a desperate situation at Innisfail with two of our leading medical practices, that are not going to continue much longer.

"Roadhouses - I pulled over, dying of hunger, and we needed petrol in the car, but the roadhouses were closed; they couldn't get anyone to work there. Chemists, a lady came over to me in Mount Isa (last week), desperate for chemists."

Prior to the Jobs and Skills summit earlier this month, Mr Katter sought feedback and submissions from his electorate and submitted a report with key recommendations representing the needs of Kennedy.

# **BOB KATTER**

Katter's Australian Party

**Federal Member for Kennedy**

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Mr Katter's report recommended the Government incentivise work in regional and remote areas by working with ACCC and all airlines to promote and encourage further marketplace competition to reduce the price of airline tickets to remote areas.

His report also called on the government to address pay, housing and telecommunication shortfalls in regional areas that acted as potential deterrents for prospective employees.

Mr Katter further recommended the Department of Employment revisit the challenges of the Seasonal Worker Program under the PALM scheme to allow employers direct access to workers, and speed up visa and processing waits.

**ENDS**

For more information or a comment from Bob Katter,  
please contact the media phone: 0418 840 243

