



MEDIA RELEASE

6 May 2022

KAP – Western Queensland policy statement

1. Doing more for Queensland and Australia: A Western Queensland productivity partnership, industry and infrastructure investment, and innovation:

“The NAIF (Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility) was set up for this purpose (infrastructure and industry investment in the north) and the only thing it has really done is fund university, airport and sports buildings in Townsville. It has been a disaster.

“The Copperstring transmission line from Townsville to Mount Isa would be the most obvious thing for a NAIF or productivity partnership to fund and promote. It would open up new mines in the North West Minerals Province with a cheaper, reliable power supply, and would bring back renewable power to the national energy grid. You cannot generate power unless you can connect it to the grid. Hells Gates Dam (done properly), the windfarms at Hughenden, and the vanadium project at Julia Creek all require Copperstring to be built.”

2. Move to more, in Western Queensland: Re-invigorating regionalisation and supporting regional housing solutions:

“We should have trade training centres at our schools in Western Queensland, so our children do not have to leave town to get the qualifications to get a job in a local mine or industry. The Principal of the Cloncurry State School raised this with me, and I strongly support her initiative.

“If we are to use migration to grow the regions then we should be bringing in people who value egalitarian traditions, Judeo-Christian values (love your neighbour), award wages, democracy, and the rule of law. The Sikhs from India are almost all farmers and have a religion very similar to Christianity. They have democracy and the rule of law.

“Fly-in Fly-out mining introduced by the State Labor Government in the 1990s have been disastrous for our populations in the North-West. This uncertainty and lack of demand also makes it harder for people to get a home loan. Miners should live in the communities where they work. If the local Councils, mining companies and governments worked together, cheap acreage housing could be provided to workers. Mining companies should provide local housing to miners through salary sacrifice programs.

“The restrictive rules around subdivisions make blocks of land unreasonably expensive. Whereas if you have an acreage blocks you do not need curbing and channelling and headworks charges. When Charters Towers was under the Mining Act and not the Local Government act with all the laws on subdivisions, a block of land cost \$7,000. Now a block of land in Charters Towers costs \$70,000 - \$100,000.”

BOB KATTER

Katter's Australian Party

Federal Member for Kennedy



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3. Growing more for you: Reducing green and red tape, caring for the environment, and providing safe and secure water supplies:

“Micro irrigation schemes, such as HIPCo (The Hughenden Irrigation Project), will grow the population of North-West and Mid-West towns up to 20,000 people. Water and land from these schemes should be handed out by a ballot system, otherwise the people of Hughenden, Julia Creek, Richmond, and Cloncurry will get nothing. If you introduce the Cotton Kings and the Grain Barons then the population will stay the same. Whereas if you have 200 farms in each town taken up by the children of cow cockies, local council workers, businesspeople, and contractors, then your towns will have a future.”

4. Transporting more for you: Investing in our regional roads and rail:

“The Flinders Highway is falling to pieces. We did receive funding in the most recent Federal Budget, but more is needed. Hundreds of millions are spent on western roads when billions are spent on roads into Cairns and Townsville. There is a bias from Governments and Main Roads against western areas.

“The positive is that the sealing of the Hann Highway will be nearly completed by the end of the financial year. This is a key transport route for cattle and fruit and vegetable produce. It represents the power of councils and communities working in unison.

“In terms of rail, there should be a restoration of goods sheds in each of the western towns. Each train on the Mount Isa line should have six extra carriages. At each town, like Hughenden, Julia Creek etc. it drops off a carriage with goods for the locals. When the train comes back it picks up the carriages.”

5. Connecting to you: Backing our digital connectivity blueprint and supporting digital by default:

Telecommunications is consistently the number one issue raised in western areas. It is critical for people's work, businesses, and education. Telstra should never have been sold off by the major parties. The private telcos do not go close to meeting universal service obligations.

Funding of the NBN's Sky Muster satellite service should be increased significantly. We have had a number of grants awarded in the Kennedy electorate through the black spot funding program and regional connectivity funding program. These programs must be continued and expanded.

God Bless,

Bob Katter, Kennedy MP.

-ENDS-

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

