

# PETER DRAPER

INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR TAMWORTH

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Disappointment as Cross Bench Treachery Shoots Down Bill to Protect Prime Agricultural Land**

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Independent State Member for Tamworth, Peter Draper, has expressed extreme disappointment that the Shooters Party and Christian Democratic Party have used spurious arguments to defeat the *Mining Amendment (Safeguarding Agricultural Land and Water) Bill* in the Legislative Council today.

“I share the disappointment of the Liverpool Plain’s residents who travelled to Sydney today in support of this Bill,” Mr Draper said.

“Unfortunately, the Hon Robert Brown (Shooters Party) and Rev Hon Fred Nile (Christian Democratic Party) appeared more interested in painting this Bill as some sort of Green’s conspiracy, rather than considering the Bill on its merits,” he said.

“I feel sure the residents from the Liverpool Plains who sat in the public gallery were insulted by insinuations from those gentlemen that they were being duped by the Greens for an ulterior political motive.”

“My office has already received phone calls from a number of Liverpool Plain’s residents unable to travel to Sydney, who watched the proceedings via web cast, wondering if those speakers were ‘for real’,” he continued.

“I think the Shooters Party shot themselves in the foot, and have done themselves a lot of damage in the eyes of rural communities who are attempting to protect their Prime Agricultural Land,” Mr Draper said.

“It was embarrassing as the Rev Nile likened the Greens Bill to some cold war scenario with all the elements of a conspiracy theory, while making it very obvious he had completely missed the point” he said.

Mr Draper gave credit to the Coalition for supporting the Bill following sensible amendments put forward by the NSW Farmers Association.

“I have had a problem with their position on this issue in the past, but today they supported moves to protect Prime Agricultural Land and argued forcefully in favour of it.”

“I acknowledge the way that Trevor Khan demolished the ‘dupe’ suggestions and conspiracy theories outlined by the Shooters Party and Christian Democratic Party, and thought he gave a speech that fairly outlined the feelings of the people of this region,” he said.

“Although this Bill has been defeated in the Upper House, because of treachery on the part of the Shooters Party and Christian Democratic Party, the battle is anything but over.”

“In fact I believe this setback will give new impetus to the campaign by Liverpool Plain’s residents, and feel their case will gain increasing sympathy from NSW residents who are concerned about environmental vandalism, and the need to protect Prime Agricultural Land in the face of climate change,” he said.

“This battle may be lost, but the war has only just begun, and in the end I hope that common sense will defeat short term financial expediency.”

“Those who travelled to Sydney today to support this bill saw political bastardry at its worse, and it did the political process no credit.”

“I am extremely disappointed at the result and will continue to actively work on behalf of the residents of the Liverpool Plains to protect their Prime Agricultural Land,” Mr Draper concluded.

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