

Media Statement

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Landry calls for TPP talks to stop until Queensland's sugar industry gets a voice

Hard-working Capricornia MP Michelle Landry has called for a halt to talks over the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement until negotiators elevate the interests of Queensland sugar growers in the new deal.

The Federal Member for Capricornia - whose electorate takes in some of Queensland's key cane growing districts including Sarina, Koumala, West Mackay and the Pioneer Valley - has lashed out at negotiators for so far failing to include any reasonable deal for sugar in the international talks.

"No sugar, No deal," was Ms Landry's feisty observation, "if there's no fair deal for sugar there should be no deal signed at all."

The Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement involves trade deals between 12 countries - Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Canada, Japan, Mexico, Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the United States, and Vietnam - representing almost 40% of the global economy.

Ms Landry fears the United States and other countries may put pressure on negotiations to reduce potential gains for the sugar industry within the agreement.

"It is not acceptable that sugar continues to cop a slap in the face in many of the free trade deals that have been concluded so far. The TPP deal is the last major hope for better marketing opportunities for Queensland sugar globally, and we cannot afford to have Australian negotiators to go weak at the knees because of pressure from the U.S," she said.

"I would be happy to share a cup of tea with Barack Obama at the White House, with a lump or two of Queensland sugar, and debate the pros of having the interests of our cane growers prominently included in the TPP," Ms Landry said.

She has urged Federal Trade Minister Andrew Robb to not let sugar growers down during the final stages of negotiations.

"Once concluded the TPP will be the largest trade agreement since the creation of the World Trade Organization and our sugar growers cannot afford to be sidelined," Ms Landry warned.

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