

## Media Statement

23 July 2015



### Labor to kill off coal jobs and put up 'closed for business' sign in CQ

Federal Member for Capricornia Michelle Landry said Labor's Bill Shorten was preparing to raise the 'sword' to kill off future jobs and investment prospects for Queensland's biggest coal belt.

The feisty MP (the only female to sit with the National Party in the House of Representatives) said Labor's secret plan to raise both the **renewable energy target** by as much as 50%, and to bring back the **carbon tax** under another name, would spell a 'huge double blow' for Central Queensland.

"Capricornia is Queensland's biggest coal region. As little as 18 months ago in Central Queensland, it was estimated there were \$77 billion worth of mining and resource projects either under construction or in the pipeline," Ms Landry said.

"By plotting secret plans to bring back an ETS, or carbon tax, Bill Shorten and the Labor candidate for Capricornia are raising a giant 'sword' to stab this region in the back - killing off prospects for new jobs and further coal investment here.

"The impact would be a massive double blow to future jobs in the coal and aluminium sectors and Labor's plan would shut down small businesses.

"Aside from losing their jobs, the impact on local families would be would be higher electricity prices.

"Labor is virtually hanging out the 'closed for business' sign in this region because under their plan, no companies would be attracted to invest here."

Ms Landry said people shouldn't forget it is not the first time Labor let down families and businesses in Capricornia who depend on coal:

- Labor introduced 100% Fly-in Fly-out on local coal mines (100% FIFO) that has harmed small business and robbed local people of jobs in Moranbah, Nebo and Dysart
- Labor brought in the mining tax
- Labor brought in the carbon tax that put up power bills, penalised investors and drove away potential jobs
- Now Labor will bring back the carbon tax under a new name, driving up household and business costs.

By contrast, the Coalition axed both of these taxes and cut small business tax.

The first time MP said the issue was likely to become a key election issue in Capricornia.

“Blind Freddy can see that the equation is simple: Labor’s plan to please the *The Greens*, will equal fewer jobs, higher electricity bills, less investment and ghost towns in Central Queensland.”

Ms Landry said Bill Shorten and the Labor candidate in Capricornia should be ‘embarrassed’ to face coal industry workers who traditionally had backed the union and Labor movement.

“I thought Labor was once the party of workers but now they are happy to sacrifice regional jobs to chase latte sipping ‘green’ votes in the inner city.

“Granted, that nothing is forever, but we have already hit hard times with a current mining slump coupled with a drought. Labor now put at risk billions of dollars worth of projects in the pipeline here. And they risk tarnishing our reputation to attract further resource investors from overseas.

“The Indians and Japanese are investing here because they have faith coal will turn around. India, for example, is telling me that they would prefer Queensland coal because it is cleaner to burn and better for the environment. But if Labor shuts this industry down in Capricornia, India is prepared to find cheap and nasty coal in places like Indonesia or Africa, which is of an inferior quality – meaning it causes more pollutants.”

Last month, the Coalition put in place a sustainable plan for renewable energy that will see the level of renewables in Australia double over the next five years. Labor voted in Parliament for this plan.

“They are now back flipping with more boldness than an Olympic gymnast – but minus the sophistication and skill,” Ms Landry said.

“The Coalition abolished the carbon tax last year. If Labor brings it back they are sending mixed messages to big business not to bother coming here.”

Last month changes to the RET passed parliament – as a result Australia will see 23.5% of our energy mix coming from renewables by 2020, Ms Landry said.

**Photo:** Michelle Landry MP on a coal mine near Moranbah

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