

BOB KATTER

Katter's Australian Party

Federal Member for Kennedy



MEDIA RELEASE

22 November 2018

Taxi owners take legal action against Qld Govt

KAP Federal Leader and Member for Kennedy Bob Katter will join with lawyers in Cairns and Brisbane this week as part of a roadshow inviting Queensland taxi licence owners to join a legal claim against the Queensland State Government.

Action by the Queensland Government has seen the value of Qld taxi licences almost completely eroded and instead given 25 per cent of revenues for ridesharing overseas to a foreign multinational, instead of staying in the Qld economy.

Mr Katter has been passionately encouraging taxi licence owners across Qld to stand up and fight.

“The passionate commitment by the KAP to this cause is ultimately due to that on present trends, taxis will be a thing of the past,” he said.

“Twenty-five percent of all monies for taxi transportation will now go overseas to a foreign multinational.

“15,000 to 20,000 full-time drivers will be thrown into casualised labour with no real liveable income. To quote Graham Richardson on his Sky News show, \$6,000m has been thieved off hard-working Australians and handed over to a foreign corporation.”

Mr Katter, legal counsel Barrister John Ribbands, instructing solicitor John Maitland, Ian Coleman SC and Gerry Nash QC are driving a closed proceeding, seeking compensation from the Queensland Government arising from the introduction of ridesharing in the state, which has adversely affected the taxi industry.

“If ever there has been a bloody and terrifying example (and these words are used with forethought) of the free marketeers at work, the Judas Iscariot agents for the foreign takeover of Australia - this was the classic example,” Mr Katter said.

“Please God, the leadership of the State Government will wish they have never heard the word ‘Uber’ by the time this case is over.

“If the Government gets away with this we are in pre-Magna Carta territory, the government- the executive –the Crown – are above the law. And all the hundreds of thousands of martyrs who fought to make the Crown subject to what we call the rule of law – will all be gone.

“The ‘sell-out Australia’ brigade will sell off their country for a political donation, or worse still just to be ‘in’ with the rich and powerful.

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“Pharmacies, hotels, lotto newsagents, even the employee and his industrial award are seriously at risk from these free marketeers. Please God these forces of evil will meet their Waterloo.”

Mr Katter praised the work to date by the legal counsel involved in this case.

“The case is pretty simple – taxi owners had a property right, the right to operate a taxi. Government action destroyed the value of that property right and the Crown is liable.”

A formal roadshow giving the full body of information to the taxi owners of Qld will hit the road this week.

“There has been over 1,000 hours put in by the leading lawyers in Australia, the most-high level team we could put together,” Mr Katter said.

“The Qld Government is by definition extremely poorly advised on the legalities. Very few lawyers have much experience with the holistic nature of the law; they become obsessed with the small picture and lose or do not understand the fundamentals. We have some of the best legal minds in Australia on this case. One of the lawyers is John Maitland, who won a multimillion dollar out-of-court settlement for our farmers when the Innisfail sugar mill was sold out from underneath us.”

There are currently 700 plaintiffs, who each hold a licence, involved in the legal action, and numbers are growing. It's estimated that the plaintiffs have suffered a combined loss of hundreds of millions of dollars.

A statement of claim has been completed and will be filed in the Queensland Supreme Court by early 2019.

The claim has been years in the making, with the establishment of a steering group from across Queensland earlier this year. The group travelled to Melbourne to meet with legal counsel in May this year and again last week.

All taxi licence owners are encouraged to attend the meetings later this week:

Cairns: Cairns Hotel Sheridan, 295 Sheridan St (McLeod St entrance), 22 November 2018, 10:30am

Brisbane: Hamilton Hotel, 442 Kingsford Smith Dve, Hamilton, 23 November 2018, 9:30am

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For more information or a comment from Bob Katter,
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