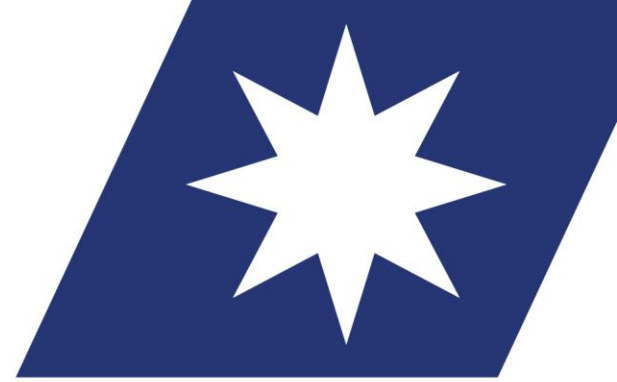


BOB KATTER

Katter's Australian Party

Federal Member for Kennedy



MEDIA RELEASE

10 July 2019

KAP vow to fight for Halifax fishing huts in a final frontier face-off

KAP Leader and Federal Member for Kennedy Bob Katter fronted media in Townsville today flanked by State Member for Hinchinbrook, Nick Dametto, and Halifax Bay fishing hut owner Ralph Poppi, who together warned the State Government to 'back off' in its pursuit to depose several hut owners from the land which they have occupied for up to a hundred years.

Nick Dametto, who has been at the front of the hut issue for several months both in the State Parliament and in the region, said the State Government has ignored all attempts thus far to leave the huts alone and that it has been "hellbent on expanding their footprint with national parks across the state".

Mr Dametto said, "We live up here in North Queensland because we like going fishing, camping, we like four-wheel driving on the beach and going somewhere off the beaten track. We like this style of living and if we wanted to live in high density living on top of each other, we'd all turn up in Brisbane.

"But the message is clear. Up to seven generations of families have experienced nearly a hundred years of huts in the Halifax Bay area and they have been left alone up until now. We've got a Department who is pushing to return the area to National Parks and a State Government giving them all the power to do it."

Mr Dametto said it was ludicrous that the Government expected hut owners to tear down their huts at their own expense arguing they are the best custodians of the land, managing the feral pig and invasive weed issue – both of which the Government are struggling to do effectively with the Parks they have now.

"The State Government can't manage the National Parks they have right now," Mr Dametto said. "They are overrun by pigs, overrun by invasive weeds and they have given us zero to manage these issues. But these hut owners are doing the job that the government is failing to do in this area.

"The Government needs to take a step back and realise these people are doing more good than harm to the environment in this area. They need to come down and listen to the traditional owners and work with the hut owners and realise that they have been co-existing nearly a century without government intervention and there is no need to disturb them now."

Mr Katter mentioned the Mabo case and cited two similar cases at beaches south Townsville AND North Mackay which faced a similar fight and won, sending a scathing warning to the ALP Government leadership that there will be no backing down on his part.

"This is not a new issue. We fought the government out here south of Townsville at Cungulla Beach. The Governments tried the same terror tactics, but we stood our ground, we stared them down and all those people ended up with effectively freehold title for those blocks. And so they should. It was vacant crown land.

"We came up here (to North Queensland) as pioneers 50,60,100 years ago. We occupied this land, we didn't have any local land offices we could go to and it's been recognised as our land since time immemorial. Exactly as the Mabo claim on Mer Island, it has been our land as long as anyone has known the land was there.

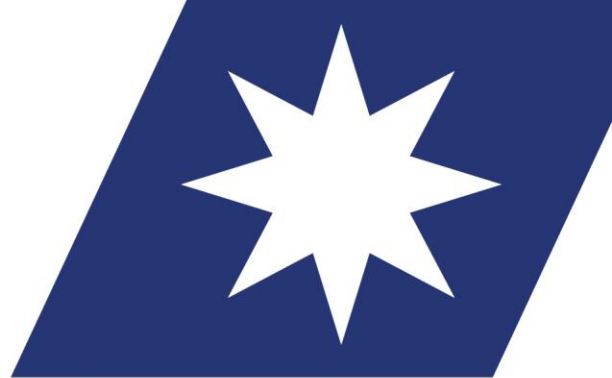
For more information or a comment from Bob Katter, please contact the media phone: 0418 840 243



BOB KATTER

Katter's Australian Party

Federal Member for Kennedy



MEDIA RELEASE

"We are looking at the worst Deputy Premier and Premier in maybe this state's history. Let the Government be forewarned because they are a bunch of imbeciles and have to be told what is right and wrong and what is the law, because they don't understand either of those concepts: 'We won south of Mackay in the same situation, we won Mosquito Beach north of Mackay and we will win this one too.'

"When you try to displace the people that are the pioneers of this land and that have lived there for a hundred years or more, you're in for one hell of a fight. You in Brisbane, Mrs Queen, are not going to take our land off us," Mr Katter warned.

Ralph Poppi, a hut owner from Halifax, spoke to media alongside the state and federal member and said his fight was focused on getting the message across to the Premier that Ingham isn't a big area, and that huts are all they have.

"Give us a bit of peace and leave us alone," Mr Poppi said.

"We've got the huts. We've been living this lifestyle for decades; they've been in the area for a hundred years. And no one has told us to move until now.

"If we lose our huts, that's our last frontier. We've got nothing else left. That's where we camp. All the huts are full of kids, from school. This is the last little patch of State land that we want to keep for ourselves and for anybody else to come and enjoy.

"I call on Bob and Nick to help us fight."

Mr Dametto and Mr Katter will continue to help the hut owners in their campaign to seek an extension as the first step and then push for permits to be granted which will allow the huts to remain in place.

—ENDS—

Media Enquiries
Kahla Kruger (nee Pike)
0418 840 243