



David Littleproud MP

Federal Member for Maranoa

Media Statement

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Maranoa MP calls on the Senate to pass backpacker legislation now

Maranoa MP David Littleproud whose electorate relies heavily on backpacker labour is in limbo as Labor as the cross benchers in the Senate toy with producers and businesses across his electorate by failing to pass the reduction made to the backpacker tax.

“With only three weeks of sittings left this year, it’s imperative to Maranoa’s producers that this is resolved as quickly as possible. I am becoming increasingly frustrated with these out-of-touch senators who insist on toying with our farmers’ livelihoods in the lead up to Christmas,” Mr Littleproud said.

“Backpackers make up more than a quarter of the national agricultural workforce and, in some areas this figure is almost 80%.

“This tax uncertainty is affecting producers more than any other sector in our economy during – what should be – one of their busiest times.

“This legislation is time-sensitive and we can’t afford to wait any longer as producers in my electorate are ready to harvest now.

“The Coalition Government listened to industry concern in Maranoa and outlined a new plan for the backpacker tax, but now Labor is stalling this pathway forward so I call on the cross benchers to step-up in the Senate and pass the amendments.

“The horticultural, agricultural and tourism industries make a fundamental contribution to the local economy and often rely on working backpackers, in everything from picking fruit to manning the bar at the local pub.”

The Coalition Government sought comment on the backpacker tax. More than 1700 stakeholders made submissions to reach a new outcome, cutting the tax rate from 32.5% to 19%.

“Labor still had a 32.5% backpacker tax rate in its official election costings and is still using this as its official policy,” Mr Littleproud said.

“The Coalition’s consulted and worked with the agriculture, horticulture and tourism sectors to bring this issue to a resolution but now Labor’s full of inaction and uncertainty.”

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