



## David Littleproud MP

Federal Member for Maranoa

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### Media statement

April 4, 2017

#### **Qld Govt needs to heed Productivity Commission's Report recommendations into the agricultural sector's over-regulation: David Littleproud MP**

MARANOA MP David Littleproud has called on the Queensland Government to heed the Productivity Commission's Report recommendations into the over-regulation of the agricultural sector and stop toying with tree clearing legislation.

"Labor's delivered a kick in the guts to rural Queensland with its disastrous vegetation management laws and now the Productivity Commission's Report outlines what we already know – the constant legislation meddling is bad for the sector's economic growth," Mr Littleproud said.

The Productivity Commission received more than 300 submissions over the nine-month inquiry, which investigated regulatory burden in the agricultural industry, and Mr Littleproud said the land clearing regulations findings were particularly relevant to his vast agricultural electorate.

"The Commission found land clearing regulations across the country is in need of reform and recommended economic and social factors must also be considered when it comes to land clearing, not just environmental factors," he said.

"I've always maintained farmers are the best custodians of the land because their profit and loss is intrinsically tied to the land's health, so it's no surprise to me the Commission also arrived at that conclusion."

The Commission also noted the duplicated and changing nature of vegetation management added to the red tape weighing on Australia's agricultural productivity, which currently relies on two-thirds of Australia's land mass.

"Just a few weeks ago the latest quarterly figures revealed an increase of 10% in our agricultural industry and, while things are looking good right now, governments at all levels must work together to ensure Australia remains competitive so we can continue to grow our rural economies," he said.

Mr Littleproud called on the Queensland Government to look at the Commission's recommendations and build in a triple-bottom line approach to vegetation management. He also believed the over-emphasis on environmental outcomes – coupled with land clearing laws backed with vague scientific data – resulted in unintended consequences for farmers, particularly those relying on mulga to feed stock during drought.

“While land clearing laws are a state issue, it’s important people encourage state governments across the country to better understand agricultural land management and adopt long-term, sustainable policy solutions to address this imbalance,” he said.

As a mechanism to reduce the prospect of unnecessary future government intervention, Mr Littleproud believes the answer may lie in the commoditisation of vegetation.

“If a value was attached to vegetation, it would provide a disincentive for state governments’ as they would become liable for the value of vegetation in the event of any unnecessary changes,” he said.

For further information, or to access the Commission’s Report, check out:

[www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/agriculture/report](http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/agriculture/report)

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**Media Contact:** Eloise Handley    M: 0411 095 860    E: [eloise.handley@aph.gov.au](mailto:eloise.handley@aph.gov.au)