



David Littleproud MP

Federal Member for Maranoa

Media Statement

November 8, 2017

Dear Longreach Leader Editor,

Your article "NBN, the great disappointment" (LL, 03/11/17) is misguided as rural electorates, like Maranoa, and towns in Central Western Queensland were never part of Labor's plan – written out on an envelope by Keven Rudd and Stephen Conroy on a 747.

It's also disappointing your information source was the ABC's Four Corners – a program which brought us the infamous live cattle export story that had consequences which decimated rural Australia, in particular Central Western Qld – so it can hardly be trusted to give the most balanced view of the NBN.

The facts are the Coalition inherited Labor's NBN program, which was an absolute mess. If we were to continue on with their plan, it would cost a further \$33 billion, above the current costs, which was accurately reported, and would have taken six to eight years longer and probably would never have been rolled out in our part of Australia.

The NBN rollout in Maranoa is happening faster when compared to metropolitan electorates – and that's the way it should be – with NBN to be available in Longreach, Barcaldine, Blackall and Winton next year.

In Maranoa, more than 60% of premises are currently ready for service with almost 90% of the rollout expected to be complete by this time next year.

Disappointingly you have placed dispersions on the NBN, when you are yet to experience it, as the rollout is currently taking place. Since becoming the Maranoa MP in 2016, the main complaint I received from Central West residents is about current internet unreliability, which is why I find this pre-emptive attack on the NBN disappointing.

In addition, you also fail to acknowledge that for the first time, our distance education students will have designated data plans to ensure families can remain in regional Australia rather than moving to a larger centre for education.

The Coalition Government's NBN program is all about connecting areas with the least service first, that's why our plan is a boom for bush communities because rural and remote Australia was consigned to the never-never under Labor.

Rollout progress under the former Labor government was slow and costly but the Coalition Government understands the majority of Qld's agricultural wealth is generated in rural areas and that's why we're committed to growing the regions and closing the digital divide.

I represent the largest federal electorate in Qld – spanning approximately 42% of the state – and I'll always stand up for business and service growth and retention across Maranoa.

Yours sincerely,
David Littleproud MP
Federal Member for Maranoa

–ENDS–

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