



MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

CRIPPS TABLES MYSTIC SANDS BAT PETITION

Hinchinbrook MP, Andrew Cripps, yesterday tabled in State Parliament a petition supported by 284 people calling on the Bligh Labor Government to put the health and welfare of the Mystic Sands community near Balgal Beach, ahead of a huge colony of flying foxes.

Mr Cripps said the petition called on the Minister for the Environment to immediately issue a damage mitigation permit to deal with the situation and move the flying foxes on into the thousands of hectares of State Forest and National Park adjacent to the local community.

“The petition highlighted the health risks and the diminution of living amenity suffered by the residents at Mystic Sands due the presence of this colony of flying foxes. I wrote to the Minister on 11 October 2011 pleading with her to take action on this issue” said Mr Cripps.

“A week after I had written to the Minister, the only response from DERM had been to distribute an awareness flyer into the mail boxes of local residents at Mystic Sands. The Minister’s response received on Tuesday this week was bitterly disappointing” he said.

“It confirmed what many communities already know. The Bligh Labor Government will abandon them when they need help to deal with the stench, noise, damage to property and loss of quality of life, in favour of the perceived rights of the bats” said Mr Cripps.

Mr Cripps said last Friday night most of the bats in the colony left after several weeks of intolerable disruption of the lives of the people of Mystic Sands, particularly between Howitson Drive and Augusta Drive, although a number of them remain at the site.

“However, we don’t know when the bats will return and repeat their unwelcome intrusion, or how long they will stay next time. What I can say is that an LNP Government will not abandon local communities as the Bligh Labor Government has done” he said.

“An LNP Government will work with councils and landholders affected by nuisance flying fox colonies to ensure the health and welfare of the community is not adversely affected, by overhauling the damage mitigation permit system to allow for faster action” said Mr Cripps.

“An LNP Government will issue DMP’s for longer periods of time so that councils can act quickly should flying fox colonies return to locations where they threaten the health and welfare of residents. The LNP is committed to listening to local communities” he said.

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