

A strong voice for our future

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Lauga slams Ley over Olive Downs failure

Federal Environment Minister Sussan Ley should be sent to the backbench in today's LNP cabinet reshuffle as a result of her failure to approve the \$1 billion Olive Downs mine by the government's own deadline, the Member for Keppel Brittany Lauga said today.

A decision by Minister Ley was due on 24 June 2019, 30 business days after the Federal Government received the Coordinator-General's evaluation report.

"This is the maximum allowable time under the Federal Government's Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act).

"The LNP has sat on this project for over 7 months and now the hundreds of jobs the project will create have been stalled even more as a result of the LNP's internal fighting," Ms Lauga said.

"Perhaps the LNP should bring back Melissa Price as Environment Minister because she was very quick to approve the Adani mine," Ms Lauga said.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison is expected to unveil his new look frontbench today after the resignation of two Nationals ministers caused disarray in the government.

"The LNP is at each other's throats and Central Queenslanders are missing out on jobs."

She said Resources Minister Matt Canavan's resignation is also causing delays in the approval of this mine which will create hundreds of Central Queensland jobs.

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“The LNP’s Resources Minister has resigned, the Nationals are in disarray and the entire LNP Federal Government is preoccupied with their own internal war,” Ms Lauga said.

Ms Lauga said the Olive Downs mine, southeast of Moranbah, was approved by the Palaszczuk Government on 13 May 2019 through the Coordinator General, yet the mine’s owners are still awaiting Federal Government approval.

“Bewilderingly, it’s now been over seven months and still no federal decision,” said Ms Lauga.

She said this inaction was delaying a new coal mine that will bring a \$1 billion investment along with 500 full-time equivalent jobs during construction and an average of 1,000 full-time equivalent operational jobs, with an anticipated operational life of 79 years in regional Queensland.

“The sad reality is the Federal Government has taken more than seven months to do something that’s supposed to take 30 days, and have used that time to re-do an approval process already completed by the Queensland Government.

“Minister Ley has got to go and the Prime Minister needs to appoint someone urgently with some vigour to get these approvals sorted.

“I understand the project is ready to start construction within two months of receiving final approvals.

“I’m calling on the Federal LNP Government to get their house in order and sort these approvals to allow more jobs to flow for Central Queenslanders,” said Ms Lauga.

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