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QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT BACKS CALLS FOR PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY INTO BIOENERGY FROM SUGAR

The Queensland Government has answered calls from the Australian Sugar Manufacturers (ASM) to establish a Parliamentary Inquiry into capturing bioenergy opportunities from Queensland's sugar industry.

The Hon Tony Perrett MP, Minister for Primary Industries, has confirmed that the proposed inquiry has been formally referred to the Queensland Parliament Primary Industries and Resources Committee, chaired by Mr Stephen Bennett MP.

"The sugar industry can be a powerhouse energy producer through the production of biofuels and renewable baseload electricity. The only way we are going to get there is industry and government working hand in glove to capture these opportunities - this inquiry will provide the pathway to do exactly that," Mr Ash Salardini, CEO of ASM said.

The inquiry will explore how sugar manufacturing can be leveraged to expand Queensland's bioenergy production, including renewable electricity and sustainable biofuels.

"With the right investments and market signals, the sugar industry can produce up to 500,000 homes worth of renewable baseload electricity, put downward pressure on electricity prices," Mr Salardini said.

"We can also be a solution to hard to abate sectors like aviation, where we can meet 30-40% of Australia domestic aviation fuel needs through biofuels."

Queensland's sugar industry supports over 20,000 jobs and contributes \$4.4 billion annually to the economy. However, it faces mounting challenges, from volatile global sugar prices to increasing land use pressure, and policy uncertainty around bioenergy.

"A successful bioenergy agenda will also help underpin investments in our sugar manufacturing plants,



making our factories some of the most efficient and reliable in making sugar, securing our international competitiveness for the next fifty years.”

Given escalating geopolitical tensions, domestic biofuel capability has never been more important and could reduce Australia’s reliance on overseas liquid fuels. Seeing as sugar and Defence have co-located assets in Northern Australia, this inquiry also offers solutions to fuel shortage vulnerabilities.

“We can kickstart biofuels production and protect national security by ensuring our defence forces have a reliable Australian-made fuel supply.”

“We commend the Queensland Government, Minister Perrett, and the Queensland Parliament Primary Industries and Resources Committee for initiating this timely and much needed inquiry,” Mr Salardini concluded.

ASM Media Contact

Dr Christopher Wren

c.wren@sugarmanufacturers.org

0493 592 577

***Australian Sugar Manufacturers (ASM)** is the peak industry body representing the nation’s sugar manufacturing sector, contributing \$4.4 billion annually to the Australian economy and supporting more than 20,000 jobs in regional communities. ASM works closely with its members, industry stakeholders, and government to develop and advocate for policies that enhance the sustainability, competitiveness, and long-term economic contribution of the sugar manufacturing sector. From the production of raw sugar, bio-based manufacturing and generation of renewable energy, the sugar manufacturing sector continues to support communities, create jobs, and foster a sustainable future for the industry, and the broader economy.*