

Mr Ron Clarkson
143 Lefoes Road
BLI BLI QLD 4560

Dear Mr Clarkson

I refer to your petition tabled in Parliament on 29 November 2002 by the Member for Maroochydore, requesting legislation to provide adequate notice to interested parties before closure of the Moreton Sugar Mill.

A number of meetings and deliberations have been held on this matter since the owners, Bundaberg Sugar, wrote to me on 27 June 2002 advising the events that triggered what it called "Mill Closure Proceedings" at that time. This included a decision by Bundaberg Sugar to operate for the 2003 season. However, on 10 April 2003, Bundaberg Sugar formally advised me, and subsequently advised local growers that: "The Mill will permanently stop carrying on the business of crushing cane at the completion of the 2003 crushing season, anticipated to be on or before the 31st December 2003".

Consequently, the proposal in your petition for a legislative amendment to provide adequate notice is not necessary and unfortunately, it would also not prevent the Mill from closure.

I am aware that the closure of Moreton Mill will cause economic hardship to some local cane farmers and ancillary businesses. However, I am aware that the Maryborough Sugar Factory and other cane processors are considering the opportunities to source cane from the Moreton region in future.

Thank you for bringing your petition to the Government's attention.

Yours sincerely

Henry Palaszczuk MP
**Minister for Primary Industries
and Rural Communities**

CC: Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
Alice and George Sts
BRISBANE QLD 4000