



Tax talk encouraging for farmers

State farm group AgForce is hopeful this week's national Taxation Forum in Canberra could lead to some meaningful tax relief for rural and regional Australians.

AgForce CEO Robert Walker said it was encouraging to hear Queensland treasurer Andrew Fraser and his West Australian counterpart propose a review of 'regional tax offsets' at the Forum.

Mr Fraser suggested, and AgForce agrees, that changes to Australia's tax zone system are long overdue given the scheme hasn't been properly updated since its introduction in 1956 despite the massive expansion and cost of living rises pushed by the mining industry.

"Not only do zones need to better recognise mining developments, but the base rates of the tax offsets haven't been changed since 1994 despite ongoing rises in CPI," Mr Walker said.

"We have long argued that higher tax rebates for regional and rural Australians would compensate for some of the inequities in services experienced by people living in the bush. The Henry tax review agreed and proposed a review of zone tax offsets."

Mr Walker said the taxation system could also be used to alleviate the skills shortage in regional Australia, particularly on farms.

"Agriculture is facing a critical labour shortage and zonal tax incentives could play a part in encouraging employees and their families to live and work in regional areas."

AgForce, through its membership of the National Farmers Federation will continue to pressure for tax action from the Federal government not just rhetoric.

For comment, contact Robert Walker 0438 363 001

AgForce media and communications: Jane Paterson 0418 733 102 or patersonj@agforceqld.org.au

Grace Reck 0427 626 853 or reckg@agforceqld.org.au

Who is AgForce? AgForce represents thousands of Queensland broadacre producers who recognise the value in having a strong voice. AgForce leads the way to ensure agriculture's social, economic and environmental contribution is recognised by all levels of government. AgForce works alongside landholders, encourages and supports the next generation, builds industry partnerships and skills and promotes agriculture - for secure, sustainable, progressive and profitable food and fibre into the future.