

Senator the Hon Matthew Canavan's Speech to National Mining and Related Industries Day

Well thank you very much Tad and thank you ladies and gentlemen for being here this evening.

How good is our mining industry? How good is the Australian mining industry? Give it a round of applause! How good is the mining industry in this country? It is great to see so many of you out here this evening – a beautiful west Australian evening. It is very appropriate that we are celebrating National Mining day here in Perth because Perth is our nation's biggest mining town. More people employed in the mining industry here in Perth than any other town in our country. And so can I thank Mrs Gina Rinehart, BHP, Atlas Iron, others here representing or sponsoring this fantastic day because we should remind all Australians of how much our great mining industry does for our country.

I live on the other side of the country over in Rockhampton and we're a bit of a mining town as well, not as large as Perth, but mining is very, very important to my part of the world, and the reason I spend so much time and effort in trying to defend the industry and fight for the jobs it provides, is because it provides a future for our communities.

I've got five children, and I'd love for them to have an opportunity to stay and live and work in central QLD, and not to be forced to go off to Brisbane, or Melbourne, or Sydney, or somewhere else. And our mining industry offers me the hope that maybe one day my grandkids will be in Rockhampton as well because my kids will have gained full employment in or around the region.

So we've got to keep defending and fighting for it because of what it provides to families. There's a constant role for us to do that. Because I don't know what it is - I don't know exactly why sometimes the mining industry doesn't get the accolades it does. It can't be because people can't see you, because when I go to an airport terminal the brightest people in the terminal are those in the fluro yellow, the fluro orange, sometimes fluro pink. I know Mrs Rinehart does that a bit to support great causes. You're in very bright colours, but for some reason sometimes the workers in this industry are invisible to our political leaders.

We need days like this to keep reminding people of how important this industry is. Reminding how much it does for our country today and how much it will for our future. I want to finish by saying it's great to see how many kids are running around enjoying themselves, because one thing I don't like about modern life is how much time my kids spend on phones, tablets and what have you, but we must always remember, even the modern technology like phones and tablets, they all come from the mining industry. The modern world truly does start with a shovel, because without a shovel, you don't get lithium, you don't have rare earths, you don't have the stuff that goes into phones, into computers, into renewable energy as well.

This is such a great industry. It does so much for our country, and for the world. I'm proud to be the Federal Resources Minister. I'm very proud to join Mrs Rinehart and others here tonight to celebrate the industry. I hope you have a fantastic evening. Great to open the evening, enjoy the night and God bless.