

Queensland Labor Delegates Vote Against AUKUS

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A motion supporting the AUKUS pact between Australia, Britain and the United States was rejected by Queensland Labor delegates at its conference in Mackay over June 3-4.

The Guardian and Labor Against War (LAW) [reported](#) that 229 delegates voted against an Australian Workers Union-aligned motion to congratulate the federal government on the AUKUS agreement.

"Conference congratulates Albanese Govt investing in the AUKUS agreement. An agreement that will create jobs for the country, establish and retain a new industry being nuclear science and secure our nation in the future" was supported by [just 140 delegates](#).

LAW reported that Queensland Labor president John Battams, Queensland MPs Ali King and Jonty Bush and former federal Bowman candidate Donisha Duff voted against the motion. Left faction powerbroker and United Workers Union Garry Bullock abstained, as did Labor Secretary Kate Flanders.

Electrical Trades Union (ETU) delegates successfully moved an additional motion calling for a ban on nuclear-powered submarines entering Queensland waters.

Annette Brownlie, President of the Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN), told *Green Left*: "IPAN congratulates the ETU Queensland/NT for maintaining its historic work to keep Queensland nuclear free".

LAW welcomed the conference decision, [tweeting](#) "the fight is just starting to turn this terrible policy around".

This is the latest indication that there is significant opposition to the militaristic AUKUS pact within Labor's ranks.

Since **former Labor Prime Minister Paul Keating** made a [blistering attack](#) on the AUKUS submarine deal at the National Press Club last November, opposition to AUKUS inside Labor has grown.

LAW spoke out at a [May 24 protest in Gadi/Sydney](#) and announced its formation at the South Coast Labour Council's May Day in Port Kembla, where unions and community groups made a point of rejecting a submarine base.

Anti-AUKUS campaign groups are also organising public actions to educate and involve more of the public, such as the [May 27 protest in Walyalup/Fremantle](#).

The Australian Anti-AUKUS Coalition (AAAC) has just announced a [protest against AUKUS](#) will be organised outside Labor's national conference in Meanjin/Brisbane on August 18.

"This is military madness and many unions and others in the labour movement, including former Labor Prime Minister, Paul Keating, have criticised the deal," AAAC said.

"This is money that could be spent on housing, health, aged care, education, renewable energy, increasing the Jobseeker allowance and more. It also risks provoking an arms race, or even war with China, which will come at the cost to workers everywhere."

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[This is the anti-nuclear resolution successfully moved by ETU delegates at the Queensland state Labor conference.]

Anti-nuclear

Therefore, we move that the 2023 Queensland Labor Party Conference adopt the following motion:

1. The Queensland Labor Party categorically opposes the manufacture/construction of nuclear-powered/armed submarines or vessels in Queensland, including but not limited to Brisbane or any other Queensland port current or future port facility. This opposition is based on concerns over safety, environmental impact, and public sentiment.
2. The Queensland Labor Party will actively engage in public awareness campaigns to educate citizens about the potential risks and consequences associated with nuclear-powered/armed submarines or vessels. This initiative aims to foster informed public discourse and encourage community support for the opposition of such vessels in Queensland waters.
3. The Queensland Labor Party is called upon to immediately reject any proposal to store nuclear waste generated by the proposed submarines or any other military nuclear waste in this state.
4. The state government is called upon to, in this term of government introduce amendments to the *Nuclear Facilities Prohibition Act 2007* and any other legislation required to meet commitments outlined in 1-4 above.

By adopting this motion, the Queensland Labor Party reaffirms its commitment to the safety, environmental sustainability, and public sentiment of our state. We recognise the need for

clear and unequivocal opposition to nuclear-powered submarines or ships in Queensland waters and call upon the Queensland Labor Government to publicly declare and commit to this stance.

We believe that this position aligns with the values and aspirations of our party and will contribute to the well-being and future prosperity of Queensland. We can make a difference and ensure we continue to live in a state that rejects the use of nuclear power as a source of energy by also ensuring we do not expose the people of this state to its toxic legacy through military use.

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Featured image: South Coast Labour Council Secretary Arthur Rorris at the May Day rally in Port Kembla on May 6. Photo: Peter Boyle

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