



Speech by

CHRIS FOLEY

Member for MARYBOROUGH

Hansard 29 May 2003

VEGETATION [APPLICATION FOR CLEARING] BILL

Mr CHRIS FOLEY (Maryborough—Ind) (4.59 p.m.): I rise to speak on the Vegetation (Application for Clearing) Bill 2003. There is no denying that we live on the driest continent on the earth, yet ironically we flush perfectly good drinking water down our toilets, and hose our driveways and wash our cars with water that is suitable for drinking.

The Beattie government and the Hon. Stephen Robertson are to be commended for the Maryborough Effluent Reuse Scheme, which is an in-progress environmental project supported by the state government to the tune of \$3 million with DNR and EPA involvement. Funding was also received from other environment protection sources such as the Natural Heritage Trust and the Coast and Clean Seas program.

Is it the intention of the tree clearing ban to stop this project in fact reaching its full potential by disallowing clearing within the scheme boundaries? Secondly, does the government consider this project an important state project and therefore accept a tree clearing application for land which has always been within the scheme boundaries? Thirdly, will the government allow this process to occur so that sugar cane can be planted in the August/September season this year?

It seems a touch ironic that I have a constituent who has land adjoining the boundaries of this wonderful scheme, which has been so successful I believe it is now pumping water back into the river because it is full, but my constituent has land that cannot be cleared to use some of this valuable resource water to irrigate when Maryborough, in isolation, is only about 25 per cent cleared compared to other areas in the state with a far greater level of clearing.