



Speech by

Fiona Simpson

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

Hansard Wednesday, 11 October 2006

WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Miss SIMPSON (Maroochydore—NPA) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6.01 pm): I strongly support the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition, because this is about accountability and keeping this government accountable for its promises to the people of Queensland. This Labor government has been elected on the basis of these promises—very important commitments as far as delivering very necessary infrastructure for the state of Queensland. But why is this government now saying that it does not want to support this motion about greater accountability in terms of delivering that very important infrastructure and the promises that led to those infrastructure promises being met? Why is it intending to vote against it? Because quite frankly on its track record of the last eight years it does not believe that it can commit to these projects and see them delivered within budget and within time; otherwise, it would support this motion of the coalition.

What the government has put up as an alternative in its amendment is quite frankly weasel words, and let me explain. The regulation that the Minister for Infrastructure and the Premier referred to is substantially to do with water supply emergencies which have not been declared at this stage in Queensland. Quite clearly this government anticipates that we are about to have a water supply emergency and therefore it will be enacting provisions within this regulation. With regard to the deadlines referred to in the schedule of this regulation, many of those deadlines have already passed. Many of those deadlines have already passed, and we still await to see those reports released publicly as has been promised.

The water crisis that has emerged in this state is not because of global warming; it is because of seat warming. It is because of seat warming by a Labor government that promises much, delivers little and then does not want to be held accountable for the promises that it takes to the people of Queensland. We also see with the infrastructure crisis not only in water but also in roads and all social infrastructure, particularly health, that this government has abused the trust of the people of Queensland by blaming growth as if somehow population growth has just happened and that it did not expect it and that it turned around one day and by surprise there were all of these people coming to Queensland. I suggest those opposite go and talk to the Parliamentary Library and get the population growth figures for Queensland for the last 20 years, because, hey presto, there are no unexpected growth figures in Queensland. It has been going on for 20 years.

We have a government that now wants to blame population growth for all of the problems with infrastructure in this state. Growth is not the problem and is not the reason we have seen failing infrastructure in Queensland. It is lack of planning. Now we have a situation where the government has promised much and won an election on the basis of those promises, many of which were promises that we also as a coalition had initiated, as the Leader of the Opposition outlined earlier, particularly with regard to water, with a very notable exception—Traveston Dam. Let me set the record straight for this parliament after listening to the Minister for Infrastructure, who said that the coalition was against water infrastructure and planning because we voted against this water regulation that she has referred to. We voted against this water regulation because it included Traveston Dam. She should have told the parliament the truth, because Traveston Dam is an absolute disaster about to happen, and that has been well outlined by my

colleagues previously in the House and by that excellent maiden speech from the member for Gympie. The Traveston Dam is a disaster, but this government must be held accountable.

This motion that the coalition has moved is about accountability, because if this government does not deliver and report on those deliveries in a timely way the water in Queensland will run out. We will see our roads continue to grind to a gridlock, and it is too important for those promises of this government not to be fulfilled and for this government not to be held accountable. This coalition in opposition has an important role as well, and that is to demand better of this government, to demand better than what it has done for the last eight years. For the sake of the people of Queensland, we demand better. We are watching and we ask that this parliament accept the motion that we put to the House tonight, not the amendment moved by the Premier which will fail Queenslanders if the track record of the last eight years is anything to go by.