



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Wednesday, 1 November 2006

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Prayer for Rain

Hon. PD BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.48 am): Tomorrow morning, I will be at St John's Cathedral to launch 'Water: A time for prayer'. The Christian churches of Brisbane have come together and will dedicate 5 to 12 November to pray for rain. Queensland is enduring the worst drought in 100 years. The effects have been catastrophic for many of our farmers and primary producers, but the effects of this drought do not stop at the farm gate. As water levels continue to drop and our paddocks, pastures, parks and gardens turn to brown, all of us have had to re-assess how we consume our most precious resource.

Earlier this year I invited the leaders of our Christian churches to lend their support in the fight against drought by encouraging members of their congregations to pray for rain. I thank them for their response in coming together and dedicating a week of prayer to rain. A large wooden cross will stand in a pot filled with dry earth to symbolise the week of prayer. This cross will reside at the Parliamentary Annexe until 13 November.

This initiative is not restricted to Brisbane. The heads of Christian churches throughout the state have responded enthusiastically to the call to galvanise the power of prayer at this critical time. I have also written to the leaders of other religious communities asking them to support this effort as well.

The government is working hard to meet the challenges of the drought and will spend billions of dollars to drought proof south-east Queensland as much as is humanly possible. We are well underway to establishing that water grid. We have joined forces with councils across south-east Queensland to build pipelines between dams and move water from one area to another, depending on need. But as I have always said, we cannot make it rain. I encourage members and their constituents to support this week of prayer. Let all Queenslanders pray for rain.