



Speech by

Annastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

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WATER SUPPLY (SAFETY AND RELIABILITY) BILL

Ms PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (3.41 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Bill 2008. I would like to address the significant progress that is being made with the provision of new water infrastructure in south-east Queensland. The provision of some \$9 billion in new water infrastructure—the largest amount being spent by any state government in Australia—complements the urban water reforms that are now underway in south-east Queensland and which will be facilitated further by this bill. This bill is clearly a demonstration of the Bligh government's determination to plan for a sustainable water future, particularly in south-east Queensland where the population continues to grow. As the minister stated in his second reading speech, the south-east region of Queensland is expected to grow from 2.6 million people to at least 3.8 million people by 2026.

The Water Act 2000 sets out the core legislative framework for the water industry in Queensland. At the time it was enacted it was recognised as the most modern and comprehensive piece of water law in Australia. With the passage of time, this legislation needs to be updated to cope with relevant developments. This bill will amend the act to facilitate the implementation of stage 1 of the government's plan for the reform of the south-east Queensland urban water industry. Stage 1 of the government's plan for reform establishes the institutional arrangements for the south-east Queensland water market—arrangements that are necessary to ensure water security in south-east Queensland. These institutional arrangements ensure that the government's \$9 billion investment in new water infrastructure delivers the benefit of safe and secure water for south-east Queensland.

The Queensland government initiated a major reform of south-east Queensland's urban water institutional arrangements in 2007 to better manage the challenges facing this industry. The Queensland Water Commission prepared a detailed proposal for reform in its final report on urban water supply arrangements for south-east Queensland, which was publicly released in May last year. Under the commission's reform model, it was envisaged that the state government would in future be accountable for water security and for ensuring water supplies across the region, and would control the key water grid assets. Following further consultations with stakeholders, including the relevant trade unions, in September 2007 the Queensland government announced its decision on a comprehensive reform model for south-east Queensland.

One of the key projects underway in the massive south-east Queensland water infrastructure program is, of course, the Western Corridor Recycled Water Project, which runs through my electorate. The Western Corridor Recycled Water Project is a significant state project to ensure the security of essential water supplies in our region. The project is continuing to supply purified recycled water from the Bundamba Advanced Water Treatment Plant to Swanbank Power Station, as it has since the end of August 2007, averaging 13 million litres per day. Good progress is being made elsewhere on the project, with construction of the next stage of works at the Bundamba Advanced Water Treatment Plant for stage 1B nearing completion and process commissioning now underway. Over 150 kilometres of pipeline has now been laid, connecting the treated effluent supplies to the advanced water treatment plants to finally supply water to the power stations and Wivenhoe Dam.

I want to place on record my thanks to two people working in my electorate, Brad Perry and Paul Gallea, who have worked very closely with the community in relation to the construction of this pipeline. I would like to give three examples to the House of how they have been working in my electorate. The first one is at Wacol, where at the moment there is a planned site for an historic dig called Simpsons Cottage. Dr Noel Wallis from the Richlands Inala History Group and I were able to meet on site with the people from the Western Corridor Recycled Water Project. We were able to ensure that the pipeline would not go through the site of where that dig was to occur. They put up fences and diverted the pipeline from that area. Secondly, Camira State School had some issues because the pipeline is going to be running directly outside the school. The president of the P&C, Dean Tummers, approached me and asked if there was any way the police could monitor the construction in the afternoons when the schoolchildren were coming out of school. We were able to ensure there was no interference with the construction as the children were leaving school.

Thirdly, last week Councillor David Morrison called a meeting, which I attended with Powerlink and also people from the Western Corridor Recycled Water Project. They had issues where the pipeline had been put down with trail bike riders causing mischief for the residents. We were able to talk to the community at a public meeting and ensure that in the future there will be some fences erected. These people attended these meetings very late at night. Their commitment to community engagement is second to none. Their consultation has been excellent and I hope that for future state government infrastructure we continue with this very high level of community engagement.

The progress on this project demonstrates that the government is getting on with the job of building the water grid for our region's needs. The most significant application of the new regulatory framework relates to purified recycled water under the Western Corridor Recycled Water Project. There are plans to input purified recycled water into Lake Wivenhoe by the end of this year. The government remains on track to deliver our \$9 billion water grid to drought proof south-east Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.