




Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

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**PROCLAMATION MADE UNDER THE WATER REFORM AND OTHER
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT ACT**

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (8.03 pm): It gives me pleasure to rise to speak in support of the disallowance motion brought before the House by the member for Hinchinbrook and shadow minister for natural resources and mines in relation to the Water Reform and Other Legislation Amendment Act. The Water Reform and Other Legislation Amendment Bill was agreed to by the Queensland parliament on 26 November 2014. However, unfortunately, in usual Labor style, one of the first actions of this government was to block the commencement of this very important act. Tonight I want to support the overturning of this proclamation and allow the provisions of the Water Reform and Other Legislation Amendment Act to come into force.

There is a reason it is so important that I stand up and defend this act. One of the main reasons the former LNP government introduced the water reform bill was to modernise the primary framework for planning, allocation and management of water in Queensland—in short, to increase the productivity of agricultural lands. It was a commitment to help grow the agriculture and resources sectors and create economic development opportunities for rural and regional Queensland in particular. As I said when we last discussed this legislation, it is essential for the future of agriculture to work with regional producers and landholders to ensure that we are enablers and do not stand in the way of the state's vital agriculture industry.

Unfortunately there is much misinformation in relation to the bill and the proposed laws around the taking of water by the resource sector. I would like to clarify that irrigators and landholders can be confident under these reforms that, before a mine starts to take underground water near their property, the mining company quite clearly would be required by law to undertake an assessment of those impacts. For the first time ever, this will then lead to a requirement for the company to enter into a make-good agreement with bore owners. Anyone speaking against this motion is speaking against the establishment of make-good agreements. It also limits the rights of petroleum and gas companies to take the underground water where previously they had a right to take whatever water they wanted for the purpose of their operations.

Those couple of short points illustrate the misinformation that is being spread around by the Labor Party. It is extremely disappointing. We need to enable this legislation. We need to stop the procrastination around this legislation because it is that procrastination that is stifling this state.