



Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Bailey**

**MEMBER FOR YEERONGPILLY**

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## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

### **National Water Infrastructure Development Fund**

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (2.35 pm): I would like to update the House on what the Palaszczuk government is doing to clean up the mess that the Deputy Prime Minister made of his own federally funded National Water Infrastructure Development Fund here in Queensland. During the election, the Malcolm-Barnaby government committed nearly \$20 million towards water infrastructure feasibility studies in the state, which of course we welcomed. I also note that it was a 100 per cent federally funded program.

Mr Joyce has made a lot of noise in recent times about the Queensland government, alleging that we have stalled on these studies. Unlike other states, the majority of the successful proponents in Queensland are small organisations like councils, not-for-profits or industry associations. Mr Joyce failed to tell them that payment under his fund would be only once yearly and in arrears. This meant that some NGO and local government proponents did not have sufficient funds to initiate projects and to carry the costs.

On behalf of the proponents, I wrote to Barnaby and I tried to reason with him, urging him to unlock his safe and be more flexible with his own funding arrangements so that these studies could start. Sadly, he would not listen. Last week I announced that the Palaszczuk government would be stepping in to clean up Barnaby's mess and that we would be providing \$15 million in interim funding to the proponents to ensure these feasibility studies can proceed. Essentially, this is a loan that the Malcolm-Barnaby government will have to pay back to Queensland.

The announcement was applauded by proponents. In a media release, the headline read 'Southern Downs Regional Council welcomes intervention by Minister Bailey'. I am sure the member for Southern Downs will welcome that statement. The statement then said, 'Mayor Tracy Dobie indicated that it would have been difficult to proceed with the proposed project unless the state government had become involved, providing the necessary cash flow to progress the project.'

There was this statement from Initiative Capital, the proponent of the Urannah Dam feasibility study in Mackay: 'I am very pleased with the outcome and I think we shouldn't underestimate the effort of everyone involved with reaching this position. In addition, Minister Bailey should be congratulated for championing the more flexible arrangements.'

The Mount Isa to Townsville Economic Development Zone, MITEZ, said, 'MITEZ appreciates the Queensland Government's efforts to progress the NWIDF projects.' There is also a statement from Cape York Sustainable Futures along those lines. There is one more statement, and who do you think that is from? It is from the federal member for Flynn. The federal member for Flynn said, 'I'm pleased the Queensland government have come forward with this package to have the feasibility study done.'

Even Barnaby's own Queensland colleagues are grateful that the Palaszczuk government has stepped in to clean up his mess, to get these feasibility studies moving. I sincerely thank the federal member for Flynn for his support for the Palaszczuk government.