




Speech By
Michael Hart

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

Record of Proceedings, 11 October 2016

MOTION: WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (6.16 pm): I move—

That this House condemns the Palaszczuk government for its failure to cooperate with the federal government to take advantage of proposed funding for vital water infrastructure in Central and Northern Queensland.

This government has been caught out yet again. Since its election, the Palaszczuk government has been characterised by inaction and inertia. It is asleep at the wheel. There has been a lack of action in so many areas. If there is one member, one minister, that personifies the do-nothing nature of this government, it is the member for Yeerongpilly. The member for Yeerongpilly delayed electricity price deregulation in South-East Queensland, claiming a better consumer education campaign was needed. Then he failed to launch an education campaign in time for the start of deregulation. The minister has been found out for his inability to respond to the federal government in relation to road funding. He has been found out for his complete inaction in working to secure—

Mr BAILEY: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Burleigh has moved a motion about a particular federal government program and now he is going all around the world irrelevant to the motion.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr HART: He has been found out for his complete inaction in working to secure the vital water infrastructure projects Queensland so desperately needs. Water is essential to Queensland. It is a necessary part of everyday life for Queensland households and it is an integral part of the Queensland economy. So many businesses rely on affordable and reliable access to water.

We need to be properly planning and progressing vital infrastructure projects with an eye to the future. If we fail to do this, we will end up in exactly the same position as Peter Beattie found himself in. Projects will not be progressed until we reach crisis point. They will be rushed through and they will not get the proper consideration they need. The Western Corridor Recycled Water Scheme is a perfect example of Labor's abject failure to plan for the water infrastructure that Queensland needs. Then we have the desal plant on the Gold Coast. They left it to the last possible minute to build that plant. Brisbane would have run out of water by the time they finished it. They are completely hopeless when it comes to water infrastructure.

Sadly, we are going back to the future under the Palaszczuk Labor government. Water infrastructure projects are not being given the priority they deserve. The federal coalition government recognises the critical importance of water infrastructure—they recognise it; those opposite do not—and it has put \$2 billion on the table to fast-track the construction of water infrastructure across the country. Queensland has been the biggest beneficiary of this. It is a once-in-a-generation investment.

During the most recent federal election campaign the coalition announced \$20 million to support the development or finalisation of feasibility and business cases for 14 water infrastructure projects across Queensland. This \$20 million is not contingent on the state providing funding. This is money the federal government is providing because it wants to see these important projects move ahead. Sadly, the Palaszczuk government is letting this opportunity slip. This minister is letting this opportunity slip. The member for Yeerongpilly is more concentrated on what is happening in his Twitter feed than on getting these projects off the ground. I will table an article from today's *Courier-Mail* for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 11 October 2016, titled 'Maybe if we ignore him he might just go away' [1831].

As reported, Queensland is the only state to baulk at free cash being offered. It is more of the same with this do-nothing, be-nothing government that is leaving Queensland behind. The federal coalition has put \$2 million on the table for a feasibility study into the Rookwood Weir as well as \$130 million to help fund half the cost of vital infrastructure projects.

Mr Byrne interjected.

Mr HART: One would think the Palaszczuk government would be jumping out of its skin—and I hear the member for Rockhampton interjecting. He is obviously not interested in this. One would think the Palaszczuk government would be jumping out of its skin to get this project—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr HART: Yes, it is in his electorate. One would think the Palaszczuk government would be jumping out of its skin to get this project underway considering the slump in investment that has occurred since the 2015 election. However, the best response from the Minister for Water Supply was to write back to the Deputy Prime Minister and ask whether the \$130 million identified for the Rookwood Weir could be spent somewhere else. I table that letter to the Deputy Prime Minister.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 13 September 2016, from the Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply, Hon. Mark Bailey, to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, Hon. Barnaby Joyce, regarding the National Water Infrastructure Development Fund [1832].

There is a lack of vision and a lack of decision-making from the minister who does not want to see the money spent in Queensland and it is hurting our state. This lack of action is particularly hurting regional Queensland where many of these vital pieces of infrastructure will be built.

The people of Queensland deserve better. I call on all members in this place, particularly those crossbenchers representing regional Queensland, to join us in supporting this motion in the hope that it might finally—

(Time expired)