




Speech By  
**Robbie Katter**

**MEMBER FOR MOUNT ISA**

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Record of Proceedings, 11 October 2016

**MOTION: WATER INFRASTRUCTURE**

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (6.33 pm): I move the following amendment—

That all words after 'Palaszczuk government' be omitted and the following words inserted:

'and the federal government for their failure to cooperate and release vital funding for water infrastructure in Northern and Central Queensland'.

Some very valid arguments have been put forward in this motion. Progress has stagnated on these dams and projects, and no-one is more concerned about this than me. I have grown up in the regions that need water so desperately like the Gilbert or the Flinders. In relation to the money that has come down from the federal government in relation to the Cloncurry project, for example, they have a small area and they are a small council and they cannot afford to carry that money over until they get paid the \$1.7 million by the federal government because they are too small. I understand that typically, as the opposition has asserted, that is often carried by larger entities or state government bodies. I believe that the Queensland government asserts there are projects within this funding which are smaller and piecemeal compared to some of the larger ones that have prior funding from the state government.

It does come down to a bit of argy-bargy between the federal government and the state government as to which way that should go, and I think there are some valid arguments going both ways. It really does invoke memories of when the drought concession loan money came out under the previous government. We had to wait up to six months for that money. The then federal Labor government and then LNP state government argued the toss as to who should fund what, and it took many months and obviously both sides blamed the other, but all the while people were suffering. There is always political argy-bargy around this funding. There are definitely some precedents. I believe the states have contacted the federal government to see if some arrangements could be made and that has not been resolved or well received. I think it behoves both to come to the table. I do not think you can point the finger at any one party for being solely responsible for this situation. There is a real role for the federal government to play in dealing with some of these smaller ones, but it does not get the state out of trouble either. The state government needs to involve itself in this process and ensure that these still go ahead. It is not enough for both to sit back and say it is the other one's fault. Both are involved in the process and they need to put their shoulder to the wheel to ensure that these things do happen.

Yes, I agree wholeheartedly with the opposition's assertion that these things have to happen. Where does the blame fall? It might be a matter of degrees and that it falls more on one party than the other. I think that is where we will all disagree tonight. Certainly there are two parties involved here and they both have to put their shoulder to the wheel to make it happen. We do not want a repeat of what happened with the drought concession loans. We sat on our hands for so long waiting and both sides were blaming each other. That is the basis for our amendment to the opposition's motion tonight.