




Speech By  
**Craig Crawford**

**MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER**

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Record of Proceedings, 16 February 2017

**WATER (LOCAL MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS) AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (3.45 pm): I rise to support the Water (Local Management Arrangements) Amendment Bill, but first I want to address something that the member for Gregory said when he talked about it being low-hanging fruit and something that we should have dealt with in the first week of being in government. I do agree with him that it is low-hanging fruit. I think this bill has been sitting around for a number of years. I think the member for Callide mentioned they have been working on this for about 20 years. When I cast my mind back and think what we were doing in the first week we came into government—help me out here, Minister for Education—I think we may have been hiring staff. I think we may have been hiring doctors, nurses and teachers and trying to put a state back together that had been desecrated and destroyed over three years. I hear what the member says about low-hanging fruit and how we should have dealt with it then, but unfortunately we did have other issues.

I was quite pleased to be on the committee which looked at this bill. This was a very straightforward bill when it came to us. It did not take a lot of time, and the committee moved through it rather quickly and came to some pretty good agreement with respect to it. I am not going to repeat anything that has already been said on both sides of the House.

As the son of a farming family, I have spent half of my life—as you can see, I am a spritely 30 years old—on the land. Our family never had to rely on irrigation channels. Where I grew up in Victoria most of our water came either by bore or from the sky, but I do get it. I do understand and I do agree with everything that has been said in this House about the importance of irrigation and the importance of local management. Certainly areas like Emerald would not be the places they are today without these schemes operating. In saying that, I simply support the bill before the House.