




Speech By
Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

Record of Proceedings, 21 March 2018

MOTION: ROOKWOOD WEIR

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (5.25 pm): I move the following amendment—

That all words after 'this House' be deleted and the following words inserted:

1. notes the importance of new water infrastructure, including Rookwood Weir for jobs and economic development for Central Queensland;
2. calls for the Palaszczuk and Turnbull governments to work together constructively to fund this project; and—
3. calls on the Palaszczuk government to start work on this project that was first promised by premier Peter Beattie in 2006.

We have heard from the minister that they are on a cusp; they are on a cusp of something exciting. It must be the world's biggest bloody cusp because they have been sitting on it for 12 years.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Glass House, that is unparliamentary language. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr POWELL: I withdraw. As I said, it must be a huge cusp because Labor has been standing on it for 12 long years. This debate tonight explicitly illustrates why most Queenslanders are completely over politics. It also demonstrates why Queensland continues to miss out because of petty politics. Queenslanders want nothing more than for governments to stop blaming and start doing. They are over the cute spin of this Palaszczuk Labor government. The minister should stop whining and start building.

The truth of the Rookwood Weir is this: in February 2016 the Palaszczuk Labor government went cap in hand to the Turnbull federal government for the funding to undertake the business case. They were so enamoured with the project they would not even cough up the \$2 million required to undertake an updated business case. They had to ask the federal government for that funding. Guess what they did? The federal government paid the money.

Mr Millar interjected.

Mr Butcher interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Gregory and member for Gladstone, you will not be debating across the chamber.

Mr POWELL: In May of that same year, 2016, the Prime Minister announced the \$2 million business case and that the federal government would fund half of the then project cost, \$130 million. It took Building Queensland until September 2017 to finish the business case. We are on the cusp? It took them 18 months to do a business case! There was so much excitement from that side of the House that they took that long to do a business case, a business case about which the minister is now saying, 'It's all ready to go. Let's get cracking.' It then took the board to approve that business case, it went to the government and the government did not sign off on it until January of this year. The amount of \$130 million is there now; it is in the federal budget. What is more, there is plenty more there: the \$440 million National Water Infrastructure Development Fund and the \$2 billion sitting in the National Water Infrastructure Loan Facility. The money is there. The Labor Palaszczuk government needs to apply for it. They should stop playing petty politics.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Logan, your interjections are not being taken.

Mr POWELL: They should stop playing petty politics and apply for it. The EOI process is also open now; apply for it.

Let's face it: those opposite do not want to because they do not really want to build a dam here in Queensland. They are being held captive by the Deputy Premier and her voters in South Brisbane. They would rather delay, procrastinate and play petty politics than build a dam. The last Labor premier to build a dam was Peter Beattie, and that was the Paradise Dam 12 years ago. He too promised that the Rookwood Weir would be built back in 2006. I table the press release from that time.

Tabled paper: Media release, undated, by the then Premier, the Hon. Peter Beattie, and the then Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Water, Hon. Henry Palaszczuk, titled 'Premier visits possible new dam site' [\[411\]](#).

Their efforts since have wasted half a billion dollars on the failed Traveston Dam, so it is quite clear that those opposite are not interested in building dams. They were captive to the voters and constituents of former premier Bligh and now Deputy Premier Trad in South Brisbane. The LNP, on the other hand, will build the dams Queensland needs because we know the benefits. Water equals jobs in the member for Gregory's electorate. Water equals jobs in the member for Burdekin's electorate. We took a plan to the last election that we would build Urannah Dam, we would build Nullinga Dam, we would build Rookwood Weir and we would raise the Burdekin Falls Dam. What do we hear from Labor? Nothing. What do we get from Labor tonight? Petty politics. Get on with it, stop playing petty politics and build the Rookwood Weir.