




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

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ADJOURNMENT

Rookwood Weir

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (9.04 pm): We are getting on with the job of getting Rookwood Weir happening. Rookwood Weir will be built on the Fitzroy River, 60 kilometres south-east of Rockhampton. The preliminary construction of the \$352 million weir is expected to go out to tender in early 2019 and the weir will be water ready in 2021.

The Palaszczuk government is totally committed to the weir, the jobs and the business opportunities that it will provide, and the future water security for Central Queensland and has backed up this commitment with \$66 million allocated in the 2018-19 Queensland budget to progress this much needed infrastructure.

The Rookwood Weir will create approximately 200 jobs at peak and, within two years of construction, will support high-value agricultural production along the Fitzroy River. Once constructed, the Rookwood Weir will have the ability to supply 76,000 megalitres of water per annum for the region—a resource that will underpin agricultural growth and supply industry and urban water throughout Gladstone and the Capricorn Coast.

My area is fortunate that this water storage will also allow for more opportunities for high-intensity irrigated cropping with access to a reliable water supply. Although we want to see the obvious construction jobs in the short term, in the long term we need to do everything possible to make sure that industry and the surrounding communities get value for money.

Earlier this year, the Palaszczuk government and the federal Labor opposition committed to funding the \$352 million Rookwood Weir and, in April, dragged the then prime minister to get behind the project. The Premier was relentless in her communication with the former prime minister to get a written guarantee for capital funding and seeking a commitment to ongoing costs. It is deceitful that the federal members representing Central Queensland are claiming credit for this project.

It is important that we get this project going. While the federal government has procrastinated over ongoing and operational costs, the proponent, SunWater, has been getting on with the job and talking to the primary producers about their needs for irrigated water. SunWater is well placed to develop and operate Rookwood Weir. This infrastructure will be integrated into SunWater's existing local network, which includes Eden Bann Weir and the Stanwell pipeline.