




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR TRAEGER

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Charters Towers, Health Services; Hughenden Irrigation Project

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (2.54 pm): The provision of dialysis in Charters Towers has been a long running issue championed by my colleague, the former member for Charters Towers, and it now behoves me to chase it up as an issue. There are about 11 people in Charters Towers on dialysis. As many members would know, if a person lives in a remote area that means travelling three times a week to get to dialysis, with family often having to help. It is a massive impost on these people and causes a lot of heartache, tension and emotion. It remains one of the burning issues in Charters Towers. I acknowledge the great work being done by the local committee, Tracey Murphy, Bev Leo and Pam Jenkins who has been a long-time advocate, and also the chair of Townsville HHS, Tony Mooney, who has been very helpful. We also acknowledge the minister who has been listening to us on this subject.

Another issue in Charters Towers is the provision of a CT scanner. If a person has a stroke in a remote area and can get to a CT scanner fast, doctors can locate where the problem is and provide the right treatments. It can mean the difference between life and death. We do not have a CT scanner in Charters Towers, which is a hub for outlying rural areas. That is a burning need in Charters Towers that we hope to get a solution to in the future. It is afforded to many other places in Queensland. It is a big gap which I hope will be remedied in the future.

Today in parliament we have representatives from the Hughenden Irrigation Project, which is just up the road from Charters Towers. It is a wonderful scheme that forms part of the Bradfield Scheme. It is a fairly modest development in the grand scheme of things compared to proposals such as Hell's Gates. It is a 190,000 megalitre dam and requires an allocation of 114,000 megalitres. To put some perspective on that, the average annual flow through the Flinders system, which it is on, is 3.8 million megalitres. We are looking at around 2.2 per cent of the average annual flow—120th of what flows past in the wet—to be taken out of the river. It is a small fraction, acceptable to most people, and it is desperately needed. It represents one of the only real beacons of hope that we have in the west to give us prosperity. It would be the first dam ever built on the Flinders, which gets 3.8 million megalitres of run-off.