




Speech By
James Lister

MEMBER FOR SOUTHERN DOWNS

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Emu Swamp Dam

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (2.42 pm): I rise to speak about the Emu Swamp Dam project in my electorate of Southern Downs. It is a project that I have spoken about at length in this House. I wish I did not have to as we should have had it well under construction by now. We are talking about a project that will create 700 jobs on the Granite Belt—an area that has had a very tough time with the drought. We need the water security that comes from new water and not water pumped from someone else's supply. We need the jobs. We need prosperity and production on the Granite Belt.

Over 12 months ago the federal government put \$47 million on the table. The growers who are investing in this marvellous project put \$23.4 million on the table about 12 months ago. I was ashamed to hear the brazen falsehoods the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy uttered in the House this morning in saying that the state government is waiting for the federal government to stump up their funds.

That is untrue. The federal government has had its money on the table for over 12 months. The hold-up here is that the state government must sign the deed of grant. Without doing that there is no Emu Swamp Dam. I am ashamed of the politics that I have seen in association with this project. This project is vital for my community. It is vital for the interests of the local growers, the small businesses, the workers and the families in my electorate of Southern Downs. Without Emu Swamp Dam the Granite Belt cannot grow. The Granite Belt has been doing it very tough lately.

I urge the minister to stop the spin, stop the fibs and start getting on board with this major project. As I said, I was ashamed of the brazen falsehoods of the minister this morning in saying that the federal government has not stumped up its funds. It is the Queensland state government that is holding up this project. The state government owns the water resource. The state government owns the approvals. The state government has it within its power to grant or deny approval for this project.

I say to the minister who announced his \$13.6 million contribution six months ago: where are the state's approvals? Minister, where is the money for Emu Swamp Dam? My community are after it. They say to me every day, 'Where is Emu Swamp Dam? What is happening?' I have vowed to them that I would come down to parliament and raise a wind about this. Fighting for Southern Downs and fighting for Emu Swamp Dam is not a task for the faint of voice or faint of heart, but I am up to the task.

I am going to hold this government to account and make sure that Emu Swamp Dam is approved and make sure that the \$47 million that the federal government put on the table over 12 months ago is able to flow to the project. I will not allow this government to obfuscate and peddle falsehoods about the source of the funding from the federal government. The people in my community—the hardworking farmers, small businesses, workers and families—need this water. We need the water security. We need the jobs. The federal government has stumped up its \$47 million. The growers have put their \$23.4 million on the table. The state has not contributed anything.

(Time expired)