




Speech By
Stephen Andrew

MEMBER FOR MIRANI

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ADJOURNMENT

Water Infrastructure

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (6.22 pm): I rise today to express my abject horror at the extent of the government's decision-making that has been going on in this state in recent times. What is most galling about many of these decisions is the resultant losses across regional Queensland. In one week, the Palaszczuk Labor administration has seriously damaged the future security and development in two major whole river systems that support two very significant agricultural regions. Indeed, by not repairing the defective Paradise Dam, Labor has denied water security to the Burnett River valley, a major food bowl that generates \$1 billion in economic benefits and a huge number of local jobs each and every year. As of today, the state government has placed the Burdekin Falls Dam hydro project on hold also, which effectively puts a delay on increasing the long-term water holding capacity for downstream agriculture as well as communities and mining.

Water is the lifeblood of Queensland whether you live in the city or you live in the country. Within my electorate of Mirani, the Rookwood Weir has also been downsized and stalled again, whilst the Upper Connors Dam, which started construction in 2012 and is a very important piece of infrastructure, remains on the backburner of so-called priority projects. I am at a loss to understand the thought processes of government members who keep ignoring or cancel outright shovel-ready water projects in the midst of the worst drought period in living memory. It should be seen as non-negotiable to have reliable and sensibly priced water. Building water storages should be priority one, and to heck with any misguided claptrap spewing from the greens. Without water, it leaves all of Queensland damned and powerless. Without a state income from exports, where are we going to source money from?

Queensland has a debt problem and we all know it. The Palaszczuk government has controlled state Treasury for the past five years. Our public debt is continuing to rise to \$91 billion in the next few years. It must surely register as gratuitous vote buying in the faint hope of saving the deckchairs of our fast-sinking economy for anyone to be contemplating the bid for the 2032 Olympics as a glorious saviour. Straight up, the Olympics are going to cost \$6 billion to \$10 billion, and it has also been noted that any of the summer Olympics have run over 170 per cent on their budget or maybe beyond. If indeed we have to spend more money, it could go a long way to building all of these water projects that would underpin a permanent economic benefit that will kick in well before, and last for many decades beyond, the two weeks of giant sports carnivals in 12 years time.