



Speech By  
**Deb Frecklington**


**MEMBER FOR NANANGO**

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Record of Proceedings, 16 November 2021

**MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Water Infrastructure**

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (2.26 pm): I would say to the member for Jordan that if you want to give the agribusiness sector across Queensland some confidence you need to give them water security, because that is exactly what that sector wants. The agribusiness sector wants security. They want government to get out of the way so they can do what they do best, and that is deliver food and fibre for this great state of ours. They want water.

I want to talk about the latest debacle that is Labor's water scheme. Right now as I deliver this speech 20,000 megalitres a day is being wasted because of the incompetence of this Palaszczuk government and its reckless failure to plan. For those opposite who do not understand the importance of water or the confidence it provides to our regional communities, let me enlighten them. To put it simply, 20,000 megalitres a day equates to 8,000 Olympic-sized swimming pools every day. That is the amount of water that is being spilled over the reduced size of Paradise Dam right now because of the incompetence of those opposite and the fact that the member for Bundaberg does not have a clue about what is actually happening in the Burnett and Wide Bay. These farmers deserve the certainty of—

**Mr SMITH:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I could read my comments in *Queensland Country Life*, but I will simply say that I take offence and ask that the member withdraw.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Member, in future if you are taking a point of order, just take the point of order. We do not need the commentary. The member has taken personal offence and asked that you withdraw. Will you withdraw?

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I withdraw. What I will say is that we on this side of the House understand about planning for the future. We understand about the need for infrastructure. We understand the need for water infrastructure and the opportunities it provides for regional Queensland. We know that it is meant to be the government's job to plan for infrastructure, but those opposite are too incompetent to even look at the current infrastructure we have and give the communities that surround that dam the confidence to plan for the future.

This side of the House will not forget those farmers who have had to doze in their tree crops, like Bundaberg avocado grower Matthew Kingston, because of significantly reduced water allocations. This farmer had to wake up today and see thousands of megalitres flowing down the Burnett River out into the ocean, and that is not going to benefit anyone. It is not going to allow more trees to be planted or more tomatoes or chilies to be grown. These are the crops that the former member tries to take credit for exporting to the rest of the world. I can tell you what those farmers want: they want a government that supports this industry. The agricultural industry is the lifeblood of the Queensland economy, and the only time the Palaszczuk government decides to support that industry is when it is a good season.

What is the water minister's plan? The water minister's plan is to pray for rain. Do you know what I pray for? I pray for a change of government. I pray for that so we can actually get to work in Queensland and make sure this vital industry of ours is supported. When it is dry and when it is not a good season,

we are still proud to talk about the agricultural industry because we should be leading in the trade of our good produce to all of these international countries. Members of the Palaszczuk Labor government only talk about this industry when it rains, but I have news for them. Unfortunately, this great state of ours is a very dry state, so we need to plan for the infrastructure to make sure when it does not rain we have good solid water infrastructure projects.

Let me get to the member for Bundaberg because I think this is really important. I call on the Palaszczuk government to explain the member for Bundaberg's statement when he said that we will have 'another form of infrastructure' to cater for water storage in the Bundaberg-Burnett region. What does the Palaszczuk government plan to do with that statement? The member for Bundaberg has committed to another water infrastructure project. What is it? Where is it? When is it going to be announced? Or is this just another absolute falsity by the Labor government to delay a project that could actually give some certainty to the fruit and vegetable growers around Bundaberg?