



Speech By  
**Deb Frecklington**


**MEMBER FOR NANANGO**

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Record of Proceedings, 1 December 2022

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT**

**Water**

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (2.18 pm): Water is the lifeblood of our land. It is the economic artery that bolsters agriculture, mining, industry and manufacturing. It develops our regions, creating jobs now and into the future. It supports the regional industries. The mayors who are up in the gallery know the importance of water because they support the resources regions and they also support the agricultural regions.

We know that it is only this side of the House that understands that water is so important. When the Burdekin Dam was completed in 1987, North Queensland had a population of around 105,000 people. I say to the minister that since then it has doubled. What has happened to the water storage of North Queensland? Absolutely nothing! Just like the mighty South Burnett and the mighty Granite Belt, North Queensland needs a water development plan, not a stagnating water plan that has been the same for the last 30 years.

The water development plan needs to include new water storage infrastructure. The dams that were supposedly committed to by this minister are no longer there because he says there is no business case. That is an absolute furphy. Even Townsville Enterprise are saying they have a business case; I have seen it. I have even told the minister that I will send him the business case. Hells Gates is a transformational water project that could transform North Queensland for the resources, agriculture and manufacturing industries—exactly what the population of North Queensland needs—yet we have a water minister with his head in the sand, saying that the project does not stack up.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I take that interjection: his head is underwater! How embarrassing is it for the incredible, mighty state that is Queensland that we are reliant upon agriculture, resources, manufacturing and industry, yet we have a minister who oversees a water department that just does not get it! He sits on his hands; he cannot advocate. He refuses to advocate for North Queensland. He refuses to advocate for the increasing population.

**Mr Butcher** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Member for Gladstone, I ask that you cease your interjections.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Thank you for your protection, Mr Deputy Speaker. The Palaszczuk government needs to understand that water is vital—and not just Paradise Dam, which was an absolute debacle from the start. Let's hope that next year brings us a budget that delivers water.

*(Time expired)*

