




Speech By
Hon. Glenn Butcher

MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE

Record of Proceedings, 30 March 2022

MOTION

Federal Budget

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (4.54 pm): I rise in this House to support the motion. Why? Queensland is always left behind by the 'Prime Minister for New South Wales'. The federal budget papers prove what we always knew: the federal LNP does not care about Queensland. I was sceptical when the Prime Minister went on his press tour, throwing money at marginal seats in Queensland. I clearly had a right to be suss at the time, because the budget is full of ifs and buts, with funding stretched out over 12 years.

Since being elected in 2015, this Palaszczuk government has invested more than \$2.6 billion in water infrastructure, creating more than 2½ thousand jobs in Queensland. That is right: we promised and we delivered. That is more than I can say for this terrible federal government. If people want to see our investment they should go to Rookwood Weir, or they can head north to Big Rocks Weir or the Haughton pipeline. If they go even further north they can see the Mareeba-Dimbulah upgrades. If they head west they can see the works under the Southern Downs drought resilience package that we delivered to that community, or they can go to Bundaberg and see the local member and how we are restoring water for the community. The words 'Haughton pipeline' might haunt some of those over there, particularly the member for Nanango—

Mrs Frecklington: Why?

Mr BUTCHER: Because it is another LNP mess. It is an absolute write-off. The state government had to clean up after they tried to rip us off with GST—like they always do. They always do it. What did we do? We went alone, as we have had to do many times, and got on with the job for Queensland, as we always do, and delivered jobs in Townsville in North Queensland.

In the past two weeks, the Prime Minister has been talking a big game about building dams in Queensland. It reminded me of Tony Abbott declaring that the LNP would build 100 dams. I fear that history is repeating itself, because we know they did not build a single dam—a trend that the now Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, has followed. All we want is our fair share of Commonwealth funding, but we were failed in the federal budget last night.

The devil of that budget is in the detail. Their budget papers show that, of the \$6.6 billion worth of commitments in Queensland, the forward estimates account for only \$1.5 billion. What will we see in next year's list? A mere \$179 million that they have announced already. That is less than a third of what they committed to for Paradise Dam, and we do not even know if it is in the papers under 'Paradise Dam'. The federal government have lied to us one more time. At least Bob Katter will be relieved to know that it is not just him they continue to lie to.

Mr WATTS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on unparliamentary language.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): I ask you to withdraw the unparliamentary language.

Mr BUTCHER: I withdraw. I am not sure if I should say 'Katter' again.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: All withdrawals will be unconditional. I ask you to withdraw unconditionally.

Mr BUTCHER: I withdraw unconditionally. Barnaby Joyce issued a press release earlier this year saying that the funding Queensland had committed to Paradise Dam falls well short. That is laughable. Now he is telling me that they need more information to confirm their investment decision on Paradise Dam. Go figure! What a slap in the face to the people of the Bundaberg region. Where are the Queensland LNP members on this? They are seen and rarely ever heard. They need to pick up the phone and make a call to their mates in Canberra, particularly now that the former member for Callide has walked out of Queensland parliament days earlier than he really needed to. He should be here right now listening to this, but he walked away.

The federal government want more information on Paradise Dam but commit \$5.4 billion to Hells Gates, a project with an unfinished business case—more money in the never-never. The same goes for Urannah Dam—hollow promises that will never be delivered by the federal government if the LNP are in charge. Money promised for regional Queensland will disappear. The feds raise the hopes and expectations of people by not telling communities the whole story about the funding and the processes they need to go through. I will not apologise for wanting the best for Queensland and I will not step back from asking the federal government for our fair share of funding. It is clear: the federal and state LNP just do not give a damn.