




Speech By
Hon. Glenn Butcher

MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE

Record of Proceedings, 12 October 2022

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Water Infrastructure

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (2.32 pm): The Labor Palaszczuk government is all about good jobs, better services and a great lifestyle. Central to that is water. It is what sustains us and our communities. As elected members of parliament, given this honour by the communities we love so much, it is critical that we show up to work and do the best we can for all of Queensland—and we are.

Since 2015 the Queensland government has invested more than \$3.4 billion in water infrastructure and planning, creating 2½ thousand jobs, many of them in regional Queensland. That is 2½ thousand jobs that would not exist if the LNP were in government. Those on the other side of the House like to make a lot of noise about what we are not building in infrastructure, so let me spell it out. Since 2015 the Palaszczuk Labor government has invested \$600 million to upgrade Paradise Dam and restore it to its original full-supply level; and \$420 million in Townsville for stages 1 and 2 of the Haughton pipeline after the LNP broke their promise to build stage 2. The local federal LNP member is a disgrace and should not be doing what he is doing up there.

Mr Harper: Sacked!

Mr BUTCHER: He should be sacked—exactly right. There is more than \$300 million for the Toowoomba-Warwick pipeline; \$186 million towards the great construction going on at Rookwood Weir; \$30 million for Big Rocks Weir; \$19 million for the Southern Downs drought resilience program; \$70 million for Building our Regions specifically for water and sewerage projects for regional communities; \$40 million for the drinking water pipeline from Gracemere to Mount Morgan—it is an amazing project that the community desperately needs; \$26 million for the Lansdown Eco-Industrial Precinct in Townsville including a reservoir and 13-kilometre link with the Haughton pipeline; \$25.6 for the Hughenden Water Bank project; and \$107 million for stage 1 of the Cairns Water Security Program. On top of that, there is much more investment into business cases and planning to get more of these projects off the ground.

I must say that I was shocked to see that the federal opposition leader was in Bundaberg this week inciting fear in the residents of Bundaberg that Paradise Dam will not be delivered. It is absolutely disgraceful and he should be ashamed. Sunwater's dedicated team is working across multiple fronts to prepare for works at the dam as we speak. Three contracts were recently awarded for design, geotechnical and environmental services and expressions of interest have opened for the major construction contract. Once again, the LNP are coming into communities and lying and fearmongering, just to get their political point across. The road network around the site will be one of the things upgraded next year—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Minister, I ask you to withdraw that unparliamentary language.

Mr BUTCHER: I withdraw. I can understand that the LNP does not know what the delivery of a dam looks like. The state LNP's record is -1 when it comes to dams. Canning Connors River Dam was the only thing they did in water infrastructure in this state when they were in government. Over \$30 million has been allocated this year to rebuild, and that money has already been put to use so that experts can get the critical planning, the design and the early works underway for that project. We have allocated more funds for this project for this year than the total amount the LNP said the dam could be fixed for.

The LNP has no plan for water security or jobs and no vision for the future at all. In Campbell Newman's 30-year water plan, the LNP used nearly 50 pages but never actually spelled out a plan for water in Queensland. Some 10 years on, the lack of a plan was clear in the opposition leader's budget reply speech this year. There was not one mention of manufacturing, and references to water only appear as part of the word 'Broadwater'. It was this government that dragged the federal LNP kicking and screaming to support Rookwood Weir while the state LNP sat silent, failing to demand Queensland's fair share. Those opposite did nothing.

I am happy to report that there are more than 350 people onsite there, including 25 apprentices. We are a proud government that is delivering on water infrastructure. It is the members on this side of the House who are providing good jobs and better services. Whether it is through the 100,000 jobs guarantee through the Energy and Jobs Plan or ensuring water security in our Queensland communities, we are sticking to our word. That is why Queenslanders trust this Palaszczuk government. We will continue to deliver into the future.