




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR NANANGO

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Water Security

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (2.46 pm): Today the government made it official: the first time that Queenslanders will see a business case, not a dam, is in a decade—10 years. The government is elected and a decade later—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. I remind members that if you want to participate in the debate you will need to return to your own seats.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Today it is official: the Palaszczuk Labor government has been so crippled with crisis and chaos that they have not been able to end the water war—or maybe the water war has been ended. A decade after they were elected what will Queenslanders see in South-East Queensland for water security? They may see a business case that does not even have any funding! Talk about a fake water announcement.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: What a pipedream; I take that interjection from the Leader of the Opposition. Talking about a fake announcement, what did we see in the paper today? We have so many questions. The Premier comes into the parliament but cannot say where the proposed desalination plant will be. The Premier cannot say how much it will cost. The Premier cannot say what communities the desalination plant will affect.

What does the water minister say? 'Wivenhoe is evaporating at a fast rate so we need to build a desalination plant.' I ask the water minister: what are you going to do about the hydro dams you are building? Will they evaporate at the same rate? Will there be a desalination plant for the hydro dams? No, because that water plan was on the back of an envelope. We know that plan had an envelope. I have worked out that the announcement made by the government today, the first in a decade, did not even get an envelope. Is this the end of the water war? In about August of 2022, the papers reported the water minister as saying that the South-East Queensland water security plan was going to be released later that year. It is 10 months later and still we have not seen that plan, but what we do have is a fake announcement. I call on the government to release that plan.

We have a lost decade of water security. It is all going down the drain. We have now had a 10-year drought in water security planning for the south-east corner. We know, because of what is going on with the population boom, that government has known about this for a decade. This government has been in power for almost a decade, and what have we seen? We have seen a Premier who cannot make a deal with the cabinet. The water minister has not been able to make a deal with the Premier. It is all uncertainty. What else has that led to? It had led to Queenslanders waking up and reading in the paper—because of the chaos and the crisis of the Palaszczuk government around the lack of a water plan for the south-east corner—that they could be facing a 15 per cent increase in water prices. That is

a 15 per cent increase to the state of Queensland, which is currently crippled by a cost-of-living crisis. Shame on the Palaszczuk government! This is what happens when you fail to plan. This is what happens when you have a government that is crippled by chaos and crisis. That is exactly what is happening. Everything has evaporated—not just Wivenhoe. A water security plan has completely evaporated off the table of the Palaszczuk government. It is not good enough.

When it comes to the failure of planning from this Palaszczuk government when it comes to water, what about the communities of Bribie Island right now? What about the communities of Kawana? What about the communities of Ninderry? What are those communities thinking right now when the rumours are swirling around? The Premier has refused to say where the desalination plant will be but today announced billions of dollars of Queenslanders' money around a fake plan. What a joke! Where is the consultation? How about considering the communities of Bribie Island? How about considering the communities of Kawana? Imagine how they are feeling. They have had no consultation. All they know is that there is a water minister in this state who has not been able to plan because the Premier refuses to end the water war. Where does that leave everyone in Queensland? It leaves them with the threat of a 15 per cent increase in their water bills. This plan is supposedly somewhere between \$4 billion and \$8 billion. A heck of a lot of dams could be built with that amount of money. I say to this government: stop the water wars and start planning for the future of Queensland.