



Speech By  
**Hon. Glenn Butcher**


**MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE**

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Record of Proceedings, 23 February 2023

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Floods, Recovery; Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline**

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (9.54 am): Mr Speaker, I know that you are as excited as I am about the Fitzroy pipeline. It has been a year since the south-east was devastated by floods. Just like those before it, the 2022 floods remain etched in the minds of so many Queenslanders in our community. Despite the widespread damage, we have seen Queenslanders show our best qualities when faced with a crisis, and for that as a member of parliament I am so proud.

I have said it before and I will say it again: we have some of the best people working in our government departments and agencies, including my department and Seqwater here in Brisbane. Across that intense three-day period last February and March, Wivenhoe Dam more than tripled the volume of water being stored and at its peak held back about 2.2 million megalitres of water. As we have heard, that is the equivalent of four Sydney Harbours. Seqwater made steady, controlled releases, and Wivenhoe Dam performed exactly as it is meant to do in that flood event. The fantastic work of our expert dam managers was backed in by the Inspector-General of Emergency Management in his report. It was fantastic to recently catch up with and thank some of those Seqwater staff who went through that weekend. They played critical roles before, during and after that event. Thanks to this forward-thinking Labor government we have the South East Queensland Grid and it, along with connected infrastructure, was absolutely critical during that emergency.

Speaking of forward-thinking Labor governments, today I am proud to back in the Premier's announcement of almost \$1 billion to build a Fitzroy to Gladstone pipeline. Construction is expected to start very shortly, creating 400 good, local jobs in regional Queensland. This 117-kilometre pipeline will run from the lower Fitzroy River in Rockhampton and connect to the Gladstone Area Water Board's existing water network at Yarwun. This pipeline means that Gladstone will be able to access their water allocation from Rookwood Weir—another legacy project delivered by the Palaszczuk Labor government. It will also support the emerging hydrogen industry and renewable sector that is rapidly expanding in regional Queensland.

Late last year I stood alongside the highly respected Professor Ross Garnaut as he released the Bradfield report. Two of the key recommendations of that report were to use water closer to where it falls and to develop regional water grids so regions can rely on each other in tough times.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mr BUTCHER:** I have long said that we will listen to the experts, not those opposite. What we are doing with this project is something special. We know that water is the lifeblood of regional Queensland, so we are putting our money where our mouth is. We are creating great jobs right now and good jobs into the future because that is exactly what Labor governments do.