




Speech By
Joan Pease

MEMBER FOR LYTTON

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WATER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (5.16 pm): This bill amends the South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Act 2009, the Water Act 2000 and the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 to improve the operational efficiency of these acts. Water security is the key to the prosperity of Queensland, the economy and the Queensland people. The Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 delivers a key milestone in this government's commitment to improve water management and ensures regulatory frameworks remain effective.

The bill amends the Water Act 2000 to implement Queensland's strengthened non-urban measurement policy. The primary aim of the bill is to establish a clear and transparent framework for implementing Queensland's strengthened non-urban water measurement policy. Communities across Queensland have benefited far and wide from the Palaszczuk government's water reforms. We have benefited as a state from all of the Palaszczuk government's reforms as a result of the progressive coal royalties.

The funding provided in the government's 2022-23 budget delivered more than \$510 million for water infrastructure and planning to drive jobs and better services. More than \$447 million was set aside for water security projects, which builds on the Palaszczuk government's record investment in water infrastructure since coming to government in 2015. More than \$300 million has been committed to deliver the Toowoomba to Warwick pipeline project to provide drought contingency for Warwick and surrounding communities and a permanent water supply to Toowoomba's satellite communities. In the state's Far North, \$107.5 million over two years was committed to shore up stage 1 of the Cairns Water Security Program to support the growing needs of the Far North.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Ms PEASE: I do not know about the member for Nanango, but I am actually interested in making sure that all of Queensland's water security is taken care of.

I am sorry if you are getting bored by listening to the great work of the Palaszczuk government, but I have more to deliver. I have more to talk about. I might say that again. In the state's Far North, \$107.5 million—

Mr MICKELBERG: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. There is no reference to water regulation in the Far North, particularly not retail water, and I would ask that the member be brought back to the long title of the bill.

Mr SMITH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Thank you, member for Buderim. I will deal with the first point of order, if you would please resume your seat, member for Bundaberg. The member for Buderim is correct: this bill is concerned with non-urban water. There has been a degree of latitude given by successional speakers, but that is going a little bit too far, so I ask you to come back to the bill, please, member for Lytton. Member for Bundaberg, what is your point of order?

Mr SMITH: The Water Legislation Amendment Bill report by the committee says in 2.9.3 under the heading Amendments to the Water Supply Act that—

The Bill amends the Water Supply Act to address identified inconsistencies and clarify dam safety, drinking and recycled water provisions.

I would argue that that element is quite relevant to what the member for Lytton is speaking on.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have got me there, member. I will take some advice on that one. Member for Lytton, I have taken the point of order from the member for Bundaberg. He is correct. It would assist us all, however, if you could attempt to remain within the long title of the bill.

Ms PEASE: Certainly. Thank you for your guidance. I really appreciate it, thank you. I would like to reiterate that it is a great story. It is great to hear about how our state is really benefitting from the wonderful initiatives in place. In fact, in the Far North, \$107.5 million over two years was committed to shore up stage 1 of the Cairns Water Security program to support the growing needs of the Far North. \$40.4 million over three years was allocated to the construction of a drinking water pipeline from Gracemere to Mount Morgan, as well as necessary water infrastructure upgrades in Gracemere. I will talk about the Landsdown Eco-Industrial Precinct project which includes a reservoir and a 13-kilometre pipeline connecting the—

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Whilst much leniency has been given, I am sure the member on her feet could get the speaking notes to the bill, and I ask that you rule on relevance.

Mr POWER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Nanango. Member for Logan, do you have a point of order?

Mr POWER: There has been a wide discourse on the nature of water throughout the state. I even heard one speaker talking about Emu Swamp Dam before.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I thank the member.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Which is relevant because of overland flow into the proposed dam.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Nanango, please resume your seat. I will take some advice. Member for Lytton, I ask you to demonstrate how what you are saying is relevant to the bill. If not, if I can give you some guidance, it concerns the metering of the take of water in the Murray-Darling system and it is concerned with non-urban, non-industrial water.

Ms PEASE: And may I also mention that it does not just relate to that matter, Deputy Speaker—thank you for your guidance—but we also talk about the administration of the water authority boards in the bill. The bill modernises administration of these boards with similar arrangements to other government boards. The bill will extend the maximum term for the water authority board members from three to four years, and this aligns more contemporary arrangements for other Queensland government boards, such as under the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 and the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements Act 2021.

Also, I would like to point out in particular that the amendments will ensure that swift action can be taken to address poor performance of board members, or perhaps even bad behaviour, and we have seen some pretty bad behaviour in the House this week by those on the opposite side. This is important for safeguarding service delivery and accountability of these organisations that manage significant state-owned assets and large capital investment programs.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PEASE: Oh, my goodness me! I have obviously touched a bit of a nerve. I am sorry that I am upsetting those opposite. Permanent removal of a director by the Governor in Council is the only avenue currently available which is why a more timely, temporary and flexible approach is so important.

The bill also delivers a key government commitment to strengthening water measurement in Queensland, as we were talking about earlier. Improving water measurement will strengthen transparency and community confidence in how Queensland's rural water resources are managed. Balancing the need for strengthened measurements against managing impacts on water users has been a key consideration in developing the measurement policies and regulatory framework. Water users and the community want their water resources managed effectively. They expect the government to have appropriate systems and processes in place to ensure—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Lytton, would you please resume your seat?

Ms PEASE: Can I just say one more thing?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will give you 10 seconds, member for Lytton.

Ms PEASE: The community really wants their water resources managed effectively. I commend the bill to the House.