




Speech By
Hon. Ann Leahy

MEMBER FOR WARREGO

Record of Proceedings, 20 November 2025

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Local Government

 **Hon. A LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers) (2.34 pm): The Crisafulli LNP government have been extensively engaging with our colleagues in local government because we are committed to rebuilding the state government's relationship with our councils. At the core of this effort is our belief on this side of the House that councils are equal partners in government and that our councils need to be empowered to do the job that Queenslanders rely on them to do. That is why I am deeply concerned by the Bureau of Meteorology's announcement that they will stop using the Enviromon platform to provide real-time rainfall and river gauge data to councils from July next year.

This is a blatant cost-shift from the federal Labor government onto Queensland councils, who have been told by the BoM that they will need to source their own solution at their own cost. Not all councils are able to meet or absorb the costs associated with having to source a new platform, which is provided as part of the BoM's remit. This means that councils are being faced with passing on the cost to ratepayers, services being cut or local disaster management groups missing out on this important data.

Our friends in local government share these concerns. Andrew Johnson, the Somerset Regional Council CEO, said—

This represents a major and unfunded cost-shift from the Commonwealth to local governments, a burden that regional councils such as Somerset cannot absorb.

Councillor Tracy Davis, the environment chair for Brisbane City Council, said—

Scrapping this service to councils would mean the end to alerts and leave lives at risk. This is cost-shifting with potentially deadly consequences.

The LGAQ CEO, Alison Smith, said—

When weather events are becoming more frequent and more severe, it simply does not make sense that a service that taxpayers have already funded wants to charge for emergency information.

This is life-saving data and information. It is not Netflix. It is ridiculously dangerous and almost negligent to put it behind a paywall, as we are seeing. I call on the federal Labor government to stop the cost-shifting and find a better solution which acknowledges the important role that councils play in keeping their communities safe. We know that we are the most disaster-prone state, and it is particularly important to Queensland because we will continue to have those disasters, so we need to have that data and that information at our Queensland councils to make sure they can do their job to keep communities safe.