



Speech by

Rachel Nolan

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

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WESTERN CORRIDOR RECYCLED WATER SCHEME

Ms NOLAN (Ipswich—ALP) (6.02 pm): South-east Queenslanders know that with population growth, climate change now kicking in and ongoing increases in water demands our approach to the use of water simply must change. Now it is. In just a few years the Western Corridor Recycled Water Scheme will be a reality. This groundbreaking project will take tertiary treated water, which is currently released into Moreton Bay, and recycle it for industrial and, quite possibly, agricultural use. Stage 1 will take waste water from treatment plants at Oxley, Wacol, Goodna and the recently upgraded Bundamba site and pipe it to Swanbank Power Station, the emerging industry around Swanbank and possibly on to Tarong.

While Europeans are well used to the concept of water recycling, in south-east Queensland we talk a lot about a dry country but until now we have entirely expected to use water just once and, as the National Party's position in today's debate shows, to treat water as if it is free.

On the first point at least this scheme will bring revolutionary change. Stage 1 alone will save 110 million litres a day from Wivenhoe Dam. That is almost 15 per cent of the south-east's current daily water consumption. It will do it by providing a reliable supply for the big industrial users, notably Swanbank Power Station. In its later stages the scheme will extend the pipeline to Luggage Point and negotiations are currently underway with the farming communities of the Lockyer to make this high-quality, recycled water available for irrigation of food crops.

The advantages of the scheme are simple: by recycling water we effectively create more to go around. By taking nutrient-filled water out of the river system there will be environmental benefits for Moreton Bay and by creating a closed, reliable water loop we will prevent water supply issues putting the brakes on industrial development around Ipswich in the future.

This is a revolutionary, necessary and expensive change. Last year's mini-budget committed \$20 million to the project; it will ultimately cost \$1 billion. It is important that this scheme form part of an integrated water strategy: conservation, more careful use and, importantly, recycling of our precious water resources.

Motion agreed to.