



Speech by

Rachel Nolan

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

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WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms NOLAN (Ipswich—ALP) (6.06 pm): The very essence of this motion brought to the House by the National Party is a firm and ringing endorsement of the Beattie Labor government's policies on water coupled with an attempt to water down the accountability provisions within those policies. What those opposite have said today is, 'We resoundingly endorse all aspects of the Beattie government's water plan, but we don't want you to report every month. We want you to report every quarter.' That basic nonsense at the heart of the opposition's position on water is nothing new. This opposition has had so many different views on water policy in recent years that it would be hard pressed to remember exactly where it was when it started.

Let me give the House just a few examples. For years in here the National Party has tried to paint itself as self-styled dam builders. They are the people who will build the dams—that was until it came to the Traveston Dam which, overwhelmed in a tsunami of nimbyism, it suddenly opposed. It wants to claim that it initiated the Paradise Dam despite the fact that the public record clearly shows that this is simply not the case. And then it came to recycled water. And where was it on recycled water? Well, in the case of Toowoomba—the only case where there has been an absolute black and white yes or no question on recycled water in Australia—the National Party first was right there. It was absolutely saying yes—until its patriarch Clive Berghofer came along, at which point it ran into the corner of no. So is it any wonder that the National Party is all over the place again on water. It would be so confused it would be hard pressed to remember where it was when it started. The Beattie government in stark contrast has a complex, comprehensive, well put together platform of water measures. They include new dams. They include measures to reduce demand, and our water policy includes a water grid to ensure that water can be re-used and that it can be moved to the parts of south-east Queensland where it is most needed at any particular time.

Today, the National Party finds itself in this funny, wishy-washy position of not knowing where it stands but simply hoping that we cannot meet the timetable that we have set. That is what this motion is about. Let me tell the members opposite that, sadly, they are going to find themselves disappointed.

I want to talk specifically about two aspects of that water grid. The first aspect is the Southern Regional Water Pipeline, a pipeline that runs from just west of Ipswich down to Helensvale over a course of about 100 kilometres and which will have the capacity to pump water in both directions—that is, from western Brisbane to the Gold Coast or, if need be, as in a case such as now where the Gold Coast has water but there is not so much water in Wivenhoe Dam, in the opposite direction.

The National Party would like to say that we are not going to meet our timetable on that pipeline. I want to tell them that that is simply not the case. That Southern Regional Water Pipeline was designated as a project of state significance way back in September 2005. The corporation that will build it was established in January 2006. The pipes—or at least the start of them—are now on order from Tyco Water at Carole Park, and work on that pipeline will commence very shortly.

Then there is the western corridor recycled water pipeline which, again, the National Party wants to suggest somehow is not going to happen. But I should tell them that in Ipswich—at Bundamba

specifically—work has commenced already on the earthworks for the first stage of that pipeline, which will link the Bundamba waste water treatment plant to that huge water user, Swanbank Power Station. That pipeline will ultimately run from Luggage Point all the way up to Tarong and include three major waste water treatment plants along the way.

I make those specific points to the National Party because they so undermine what is today's argument from that side of the House. Having said that it is for and against dams and that it is for and against recycled water, the National Party now does not know where it stands. We will build these water projects and we will ensure water security.