



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**PROOF**

**MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

**Water and Environment Programs**

**SPEECH**

**Wednesday, 25 November 2009**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

<p><b>Date</b> Wednesday, 25 November 2009</p> <p><b>Page</b> 78</p> <p><b>Questioner</b></p> <p><b>Speaker</b> Rishworth, Amanda, MP</p>	<p><b>Source</b> House</p> <p><b>Proof</b> Yes</p> <p><b>Responder</b></p> <p><b>Question No.</b></p>
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**Ms RISHWORTH** (Kingston) (5.25 pm)—I take great pleasure in speaking on this MPI because water is one of the most important issues to South Australians. We heard the member for Mayo talk about how good the \$10 billion water plan of the previous Prime Minister was. Unfortunately, it was only a plan on paper. Not one cent of that water plan was actually delivered. It is very disappointing because for the 11 years during which he was the Prime Minister we saw no effort on water. Closer to the election—when he realised he needed to look a bit environmental, to get in touch with the greens—he decided to put forward this plan with no intention of ever delivering it.

I will point out a couple of things. Firstly, I note that the member for Mayo said we all agree with buybacks. He obviously missed the member for Parkes, who actually indicated that he was against buybacks. This once again highlights the division within the Liberal and National parties. The member for Mayo supports buybacks and the Leader of the Opposition supports buybacks. On 5AA on 28 April 2009, the Leader of the Opposition said:

I think there is a role for government in buying back water and, indeed, I undertook to buy back water when I was the water minister.

So we see the Liberal Party seeming to support buybacks but then we have the National Party which does not support buybacks. There is a real tension that seems to keep raising its ugly head in this place. Whether it is on the CPRS or on things like the structural separation of Telstra, we see that the Liberal Party and the National Party are constantly at odds and divided with one another.

But we are talking about what this government is doing for water. This government has a very clear plan. We have made it clear that water buybacks are part of the solution to improve environmental flows and in fact we have secured 638 gigalitres worth \$996 million. This has been a very successful program returning significant water to the Murray-Darling Basin. In addition to this, we have also invested significant amounts on irrigation infrastructure. I will talk about one project in McLaren Vale in my local electorate. I am so pleased to see the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government here in the chamber because he

came with me as opposition water minister to pledge to the people of McLaren Vale that he would provide the money to deliver recycled water. We have delivered on that pledge. We have heard the member for Parkes and the member for Mayo say, 'You haven't delivered anything.' I can tell you 120 irrigators in McLaren Vale have been able to switch from mains water to recycled water, saving the need for them to draw water from the Murray-Darling system.

In Adelaide there has been a significant amount of investment in water infrastructure to reduce our reliance on the Murray. We in Adelaide know that we are one of the driest places and that we rely on the Murray-Darling system for our drinking water. The Rudd government has invested significant money. We heard before that there was supposedly no money spent on things like stormwater and recycled water. Obviously, the member for Mayo, who made that claim, has not been reading my newsletter. Otherwise, he would know of the recent significant announcement that this government would deliver \$14.97 million for the city of Onkaparinga to invest in stormwater infrastructure to enable us to follow through with an innovative stormwater capture project to drought proof the south. This is what South Australians have been calling for—money to be delivered to their local electorates.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr S Georganas)**—Order! The time allotted for this discussion has concluded.