

Adrian Pederick MP

Member for Hammond

Wednesday, 19 February 2014

12 years of regional neglect under Labor

I was interested to read comments made in the Murray Valley Standard article 'Safe seat blues' on Tuesday 18 February.

Misleading and incorrect comments made by Minister Gago regarding the River Murray must be set straight.

As the Member for Hammond, I have been extremely active in the fight for the health of the River Murray, an issue that I am passionate about and has been a priority of mine since being elected to Parliament in 2006.

I was passionate about a fresh water outcome for the entire river system, including Lake Albert and Lake Alexandrina.

I fought strongly against the Wellington Weir proposal during the drought.

I continue to work with the Meningie and Lower Lakes communities on their plans for a return to health for Lake Alexandrina, Lake Albert and the Coorong.

I was there when the bunds were dug up and water flows returned to the Murray Mouth.

For 12 years the regions have been neglected under the Weatherill Labor Government. We have seen continued cuts to PIRSA and Biosecurity SA, Regional Development Australia and the Advisory Board of Agriculture.

The price of water for our primary producers has continued to climb under the Weatherill Labor Government, to a position where many farms are no longer viable and other farmers have had to make the tough decision to downsize and destock.

Steven Marshall and the State Liberals recognise the importance of rural and regional South Australia and will make our regions a priority if elected to Government in 23 days.

This week we have announced our vision for a better future for agriculture in South Australia and committed to increase funding to Regional Development Australia entities to \$3 million per year.

The State Liberals have also committed to reinstating funding to the Advisory Board of Agriculture, \$1 million to helping our food producers through Food SA and an additional \$500,000 to combat fruit fly.

Premier Weatherill and Labor have neglected our State's regions for 12 years.

Only a Marshall Liberal Government will support our regions and have better priorities to put our State back on track.