



MEDIA RELEASE

Adrian Pederick MP JP

Member for Hammond

Shadow Minister for

The River Murray - Sustainability and Climate Change

Agriculture, Food and Fisheries - Forests

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Liberals wearing blue for the river and lakes

United in their support for a fairer deal for the Lower Murray State Liberal MPs and MLCs have joined the blue ribbon campaign, wearing their ribbons in Parliament House.

The campaign seeks to raise awareness of the river and lakes' plight and raise funds to buy environmental water for the Lower Murray.

Local MP Adrian Pederick – newly appointed Shadow Minister for the River Murray – said he and his colleagues were proud to be part of the push for the lower Murray and lakes to receive more priority in the current crisis.

“Everyone and everything along the river is dependent on it to some extent, but none more so than the environment itself. Without that, we cannot sustain any of the industry and activity we have all come to take for granted on this iconic waterway,” he said.

Opposition Leader Martin Hamilton-Smith said: “I urge all South Australians to support the blue ribbon campaign and stand shoulder-to-shoulder with river communities. Along with the State Liberals, the community is showing real leadership on this issue – sadly lacking by Premier Rann and Minister Maywald”.

Mr Pederick said he was pleased the state and federal governments are finally bringing forward packages to assist river communities - but was concerned why it had taken so long and why actions were so slow?

“The State Liberals have been calling for urgent action to support farmers and irrigators for months. At the same time we've been urging governments not to take drastic and potentially terminal action with a weir and salt-water inundation of the lakes,” he said.

“As local member I've been following this closely and it's been all too apparent that the government's responses have been ill-conceived and ill-timed. They've rushed some decisions without proper science to back them and shuffled others that needed urgent action to enable landowners and irrigators to make prudent, positive decisions.”

Mr Pederick said the full audit of the resource was an important first step in the proper management of the Murray Darling Basin but it must be followed by thorough metering and monitoring of every private storage and diversion in the whole basin.

‘But most critically, control of the entire basin must be given immediately to a fully independent body with absolute authority to act in the best interests of this national treasure.’

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He said the Liberals supported the calls from local mayors for river and lakes communities to be resilient in managing the effects of low flows and work together to secure the river's future for coming generations.

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