

MEDIA RELEASE

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Member for Hammond

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The River Murray - Forests

Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

Wednesday August 26, 2009

Pt Sturt pipeline decision welcome but belated

News that a pipeline to supply water to Pt Sturt and Hindmarsh Island was now likely has been greeted with cautious optimism by local MP Adrian Pederick.

Mr Pederick, who is also Shadow Minister for the River Murray, said the confusion, delay and contradictions that preceded this expected approval have caused great anguish to local residents and farmers.

'These beleaguered communities have been on the outer of all previous plans to pipe water to lakes' towns,' Mr Pederick said.

'They've been given various promises over the past eight months about this and are cautious about expecting too much.

'They've been misled, confused and delayed by the state government who originally discouraged them from applying and then fumbled their eventual application.

'Given the amount involved, just over \$7 million, it should not have been out of the question for the state government to back it from the start.

'I have raised this matter in parliament several times, most recently during Budget Estimates Committee, in which I asked Water Security Minister Maywald about the state government's lack of support for these communities.

'Her response was that they should go through normal channels to access water and pay what amounted to a huge sum of money. She repeated that statement on radio, much to the disgust and dismay of residents.

'The truth is their situation is far from normal. They have been deprived of their access to water from Lake Alexandrina, which has been there since settlement 150 years ago.

'I fully understand how miffed residents are that this news comes to them via the media and not through some official but simple channel.

'This has caused great stress and upset for families and communities and could have been avoided had the government been upfront with them about the situation from the start.' This Rann Government has stopped listening to communities like Point Sturt because after eight long years they are tired, arrogant and out of touch.