



Speech By  
**Mark Robinson**  
**MEMBER FOR OODGEROO**

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Record of Proceedings, 2 May 2018

## ADJOURNMENT

### Water Prices

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (7.00 pm): I rise to inform the House of the concerns of Redland residents about Labor's pending water price hike. I have heard from local residents and businesses that they are worried about the future financial climate in the Cleveland district under Labor. The cost of living and the cost of doing business is becoming unsustainable for many. Under Labor, the SEQ bulk water price will increase by nine per cent or \$88 for Redland residents. That price hike makes our water increases the largest in South-East Queensland.

Our water used to be cheap. The former Redland shire council had the foresight to plan, secure and construct the necessary water infrastructure for our valuable water resources and kept water price increases low. However, the once-cheap local Redlands water does its circuit around Labor's Seqwater network and comes back dramatically more expensive as state bulk water. When Labor seized control of Redlands water, they failed to tell local residents and businesses how very expensive their decision would be.

Today, owners of local businesses, such as Pierre's Cafe, are worried. Pierre's Cafe is a local Cleveland business located in Middle Street, owned and operated by Sharon Milne. Sharon was so angry about the water price rises and the impacts of Labor policy on her business that she was prepared to speak out about it on ABC TV news recently. After seeing the story on the news, I met with Sharon. She told me that the water price rise will impact her business negatively, which will be placed under unnecessary pressure. She is concerned about the increased costs to run the cafe, with increased power bills and now increased water bills.

She is concerned about the impact on some of her customers who are already feeling the pressure of the increased cost of living. She said that those costs have to be paid for in some way. She asked what small businesses like hers are supposed to do to make ends meet. Sharon suggested that Labor's water price rises would put pressure on the costs of goods and services, and upon staffing. Would she pass costs on to customers if at all possible, although not desirable? Would she be able to keep her staff in the same levels of employment?

Unlike Labor, small businesses have to balance the books and live within their means. The local businesses of Redland City and South-East Queensland cannot afford the next two years of this Labor government and certainly they cannot afford a federal Shorten Labor government. Under the LNP government, the costs of living and doing business were lower. Small business growth and job creation were up and unnecessary compliance measures, red tape and green tape were reduced. Labor's higher water prices mean my local residents and small businesses are out of pocket. The costs of goods and services will be under pressure to rise and jobs will be put at risk. It is time for Labor to listen to the pleas of my community and stop treating small businesses like cash cows.