



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Media Release

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Barraba water supply flagged with PM

The Barraba water supply was today flagged with the Prime Minister Kevin Rudd by the Independent Member for New England Tony Windsor.

Mr Windsor asked the Prime Minister during Question Time if he was aware that Barraba had effectively run out of water from normal sources and is entirely reliant on emergency groundwater bores.

As a result of the question, the Prime Minister asked his Parliamentary Secretary on Water, the Hon Mike Kelly to take on the task of investigating the problem and immediately after question time met with Mr Windsor to discuss the situation with the Prime Minister also stopping in to learn more.

Mr Windsor is very pleased with the Prime Minister's response and the immediate attention promised.

"The situation with Barraba's water supply needs urgent attention and I am very pleased that both the Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd and the Parliamentary Secretary Mike Kelly have spoken with me so promptly.

"Mike Kelly has agreed to look at the issue after the meeting that Member for Tamworth Peter Draper, Tamworth Regional Council Mayor Cllr James Treloar and I have with the NSW Minister for Water Phil Costa in the very near future.

"I thank the Prime Minister and his Parliamentary Secretary for their concern and look forward to all levels of government working together to fund the pipeline from Split Rock Dam to Barraba to provide the long term secure water supply that the Barraba community needs to have for their future," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor's Question and the PM's answer follow

Mr WINDSOR (3.10 pm)—My question is to the Prime Minister, and it relates to the government's commitment to critical human water needs within the Murray-Darling Basin. Is the Prime Minister aware that the township of Barraba, north of Tamworth, has effectively run out of water from normal sources and is entirely reliant on emergency groundwater bores for its highly restricted water supply? Given that this town has been experiencing a water crisis for some years now and that the only long-term solution is a pipeline to Split Rock Dam, would the Prime Minister be amenable to investigating a financial solution in conjunction with the Tamworth Regional Council and the New South Wales government?

Mr RUDD—I welcome the question from the member for New England. I know his concern for his constituency and people who are doing it tough, particularly because of problems with the Murray-Darling system and the secure delivery of water to individual towns and areas within his electorate. I am not aware of the circumstances that concern that town. In response to the honourable member's question I suggest that the parliamentary secretary now engage the honourable member on what can be done about his specific proposal. This side of the House seeks to engage other members when they come forward with a practical idea of how to fix X, Y and Z and A, B and C. The honourable member has come forward with an idea. I will have the parliamentary secretary investigate it to see whether we can do something about it that is practical and sustainable..... The member for New England's question goes to the locality and the town. I have outlined the course of action that we will undertake.....

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