



MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

LABOR DISHONEST ON TOWNSVILLE WATER CHARGES

Member for Hinchinbrook, Andrew Cripps, has warned Townsville ratepayers the Bligh Labor Government is not being honest about the causes of increased water charges and said the State Government was responsible for the most serious cost of living pressures.

Mr Cripps said Natural Resources Minister, Stephen Robertson and Member for Thuringowa, Craig Wallace had been deliberately dishonest by blaming the Townsville City Council for increased water charges and were blatantly misleading Townsville ratepayers.

“It is not my intention to become involved in a debate between Townsville ratepayers and the Townsville City Council. I understand and respect the fact that many ratepayers are concerned and they have every right to ask for more information” said Mr Cripps.

“However, the attacks on Townsville City Council by Minister Robertson and Minister Wallace are politically motivated and must be corrected for the record. Townsville ratepayers need to understand that Robertson and Wallace are passing the buck” he said.

“The fact is the Bligh Labor Government put in place the provisions of the new Local Government Act 2009. It requires local councils to recover the full cost of delivering water to ratepayers. There are several factors pushing up the cost of that service” said Mr Cripps.

“Firstly, the Bligh Labor Government has scrapped the subsidies that were previously available to local councils when water and sewerage capital infrastructure needed to be replaced. Water infrastructure projects attracted a 40 per cent subsidy” he said.

“Now the Bligh Labor Government has cut off that funding, local councils are forced to fully depreciate their existing water infrastructure assets, putting aside funds that will meet the cost of replacing and upgrading water infrastructure in the future” said Mr Cripps.

“Secondly, one of biggest costs associated with the treatment and delivery of water is electricity used to run plant machinery and pumps. The Bligh Labor Government has overseen a massive increase in the price of electricity in recent years” he said.

CONT...

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“Stephen Robertson has a real nerve attacking the Townsville City Council. Not only is he the Minister responsible for water, he is the Energy Minister who has refused to act on spiralling electricity costs in Queensland for families and businesses” said Mr Cripps.

“Craig Wallace’s hypocrisy knows no bounds. He is a Minister in the Bligh Labor Government that has not only increased electricity prices, but slugged Queenslanders with higher vehicle registrations and introduced a new 9 cents per litre fuel tax” he said.

Mr Cripps said he hoped Townsville ratepayers would see through the political spin and buck passing from the Bligh Labor Government and would engage in the public discussion about the water access charges with Townsville City Council aware of all the facts.

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