

TO THE HONOURABLE SENATORS'

As a resident of Leeton for 50 yrs (a community that exists only because of irrigation) I wish to express my concerns as to the seeming lack of foresight that has become apparent in the Water Act of 2007 and its effect on the Murray Darling basin. The farmers in this area depend on water for their incomes and the same does the whole community. Whilst irrigators have not suffered as much as dry area farmers they have suffered and to follow up the biggest drought of years with the removal of up to 47% of the growers water allocation is ludicrous at best. The great majority of farmers have interest in retaining the sustainability of their land and are PRACTISING environmentalists.

The establishing of the Irrigation and Hydro electric schemes showed great foresight and initiative and the establishment of the 'FOOD BOWLS OF AUSTRALIA' and a source of uncontaminated food at that. Those that advocate reduction of water to these highly productive areas are jeopardising their own existence. The farmers in these areas need to be allowed to do what they do efficiently and well which is grow food for the population. The supposed over allocation of water did not cause the past drought (that is in the hands of the almighty) so surely the current solution is to provide more water storage and I'm sure there are corporations that would financially support this initiative. The Government of this nation needs to act with forethought and sincerity as long term goals of sustainable agricultural production will not be achieved by taking away the farmers water and driving them off the land.

This act and any following legislation needs to be given the privilege of accurate and substantiated scientific data balanced by practical and long term decision making, it should not be overruled by short term political expediency.

Our rural infrastructure needs to be supported not victimised.