

## Labor alienating basin plan supporters

Labor is destroying community goodwill on the basin plan with its stance backing basin plan opponents the Greens, says Steve Whan CEO of the National Irrigators Council.

Steve Whan said “over the past 24 hours I have been inundated with messages from moderate people and community leaders who have been working to implement the basin plan, but who are telling me that if their effort and faith is rejected by the Parliament their support will be gone.

“Yesterday Labor Shadow Minister Tony Burke said he needed answers on:

- Protecting environmental water
- Comprehensive response to allegations of theft in the northern basin
- Indigenous consultation and engagement in water planning/governance
- Accuracy of data modelling and assumptions.

“Those following closely the large number of reviews, investigations, studies and papers for Ministerial Council know that during the last few months a huge amount of work has been done.

“Irrigators have done their bit in this and made it very clear that we have zero tolerance for water theft and are willing to work with Government on protecting environmental flows (the problem is very small and isolated to unregulated rivers).

“Irrigation communities are asking why, when they have engaged over years in good faith, their Labor representatives can get to the last second saying they don't have enough information and make a negative decision.

“If Labor backs the Greens they risk alienating the very people they need to make the plan work. The people who provide the voters in every Victorian, NSW, Qld and South Australian Labor seat with their fresh milk, fruit and veg.

“Labor introduced the basin plan with bipartisan support, it ended years of argument and uncertainty. Do Australians really want to see their Parliament restart the fights?

**Media Contact: Steve Whan 0429 780 883**

**Wednesday 7 February 2018**