

BILL SYKES MP

Member for Benalla District

"Working for you"



bs:kf

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Letter to the Editor

Re: Pipeline – resistance grows

Resistance to the North-South pipeline is growing as more people realise that the proposal is flawed because it proposes to take water from a 'water stressed' area to service Melbourne's growing needs when other options such as reduced consumption, recycling and storm water capture are readily available.

Another major concern is the gross over estimate of potential water savings especially in dry years. This means that in dry years, Melbourne may only receive 10-20GL – far less than the 75GL upon which the 'crude' costings have been done. This is likely to make the water much more expensive than other options.

Most disturbing is that the Food Bowl Alliance Plan for water savings concentrates only on major channels and proposes to shift the cost of maintaining smaller channels and the high losses to irrigators served by these smaller channels.

This means that much of the so called savings are simply transference of losses from public responsibility to private responsibility rather than true savings.

This in itself is deceitful and the consequence is unacceptable. The consequence will be a higher water cost to smaller irrigators unable to afford necessary infrastructure upgrades leading to the accelerated demise of many small irrigators.

Fortunately some members of the Food Bowl Alliance have recognised that the plan which they originally supported is no longer worthy of support because of the harm that it will cause to local families and communities.

Well done to Food Bowl Alliance members such as Dean Pullar and Ken Muston for going public with their concerns.

The following statistics highlight the strong and growing public opposition to the pipeline:-

- Anti-pipeline petitions taken to Parliament 18,454 signatures
- 3 WIN TV viewer polls 95%, 97%, 98% against
- Plug the Pipe website vote 1,400 votes, 97% against
- VFF 300 votes, 99% against

To Mr Brumby I say, listen to the people and Plug the Pipeline!

Yours sincerely

BILL SYKES MP
Member for Benalla