

Mr Glen Andrezza

17<sup>th</sup> December 2010

The Committee Secretary  
Senate Standing Committee on Rural Affairs & Transport  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a third generation farmer from Griffith. I have four children and have been married for 22 years and farming for 30 years.

I love farming, it is my passion, and it is really all I have ever known. I never liked school, nor did I ever do very well, but through farming I have established a good life and successful business as a food producer. My farming efficiency won me the title of 2<sup>nd</sup> best rice grower in the world in 2006. Farming can be stressful and forces me to make many sacrifices, which in turn puts a huge strain on family life. Through persistence and wonderful family support we have maintained our business in spite of the drought.

Then just when we thought things were improving, the MDBA produced the "Guide to the proposed Basin Plan", and I wondered to myself "is the whole world against us!?"

Farmers are constantly at war with the weather, now it seems, we also have to fight politics. I have no faith at all in the MDBA. I may not have finished year 10, but, I am an excellent businessman, who has successfully provided for my family and wider community for 30 years. Does the MDBA think that just because they are educated and highly payed they know better than me 'a farmer' how to look after the environment? The MDBA is treating us as if we are ignorant, when in fact it is the Authority that is grossly incompetent.

As a father, all I want is to provide my family with opportunities and a comfortable lifestyle. If this ridiculous plan goes ahead it will not only annihilate my business and means to earn a living, but also decimate Griffith and surrounding towns, causing job losses of a lot more than just 800 people. Where are we going to go? Where will I find work? Why do my children have to be forced to leave the home they love because a group of bureaucrats have no idea what they are doing?

The pain and uncertainty of my future is heartbreaking, but what is much harder to take are the funerals of fellow farmers I have had to attend recently, because they just did not know where to turn and finally made a fatal decision, that they thought would solve their problems! By the obvious stupidity of the MDBA lives are being destroyed in the worst possible ways! If this is what years at university and education teaches people, then I am glad I did not finish school! With this joke of a MDBP the current government will destroy

years of hard work, communities, families and Australians! The MDBP must be scrapped immediately!

Farmer's work all year to produce a crop (which we have been unable to do in years) and then we are at the mercy of the weather. This is part of farming and this we can manage; we have been doing it for generations, my father and grandfather before me. It is the government interference that makes farming so difficult. Farmers are also the best environmentalists; we know how to manage our business using excellent water efficiency practices, to grow the best possible crops while conserving water for the environment. I have spent thousands of dollars on my property to implement water efficiency schemes that have already reduced my farm water use. My business cannot survive a further 43% loss in water allocation.

Clearly the scientists who helped to produce this plan have no intention of helping farmers, or Australia for that matter, as their sole intent with this plan is focussed on the environment. It is not balanced and needs to take into account the social and economic needs of the communities in the basin... "The Food Bowl" of Australia that helps to feed our nation. Do we really want to become a sole importer of food, for the sake of a group of bureaucrats who clearly have no common sense or sense of community or even pride or care for their fellow Australians? The MDBA are intent on saving the frogs and fish at the cost of human loss, instead of finding a way to save us all!

I have just finished harvesting, what crop I had left after the rain. I am tired, stressed, frustrated and upset. I have little faith in the MDBA; I don't know where I will be in 12 months time. My responsibility to my family gives me the strength to fight for our well-being! Farming is all I know! I am asking that this ridiculous plan be scrapped and we all start working together towards a balanced plan that takes care of food producers and the environment equally.

Building more Dams is a very easy way to solve all our issues. During this flood we should be harvesting water instead of letting it go to waste. That way we will be better prepared when the next drought arrives. Government needs to work with the farmers instead of against them. Give us all a break, I am sick of seeing my family scared, tense and sad, I am sick of not having a crop, and I am sick of being told what to do by people who don't know what they are talking about. Stop destroying the thing in life that makes me happy, Farming!

The MDBA needs to be scrapped immediately along with the proposed plan! We need to come up with a balanced plan that looks after food production and the environment equally!!!!

Sincerely,

Glen Andrezza