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From: Mr Tony Windsor
Secretary: S

Dear Mr Chairman  
The Secretariat + the  
Regional Australia

I am not usually a great letter writer, however after recent meetings in our areas + towns I, like many others put pen to paper to try + help save our great FOOD PRODUCING IRRIGATION AREAS.

\* Effects on our Districts if this plan goes ahead.

In the past 10 years living through the horrific drought, we have all witnessed first hand the effects of having no irrigation water have on our regions. Not just the irrigators, but the local shopkeepers + everyone in our towns. The lack of production on farms flows right through everything, including transport companies that carry our goods to ports ect. We have seen people leave our areas in their droves, because, along with the water, the jobs have dried up as well. The same would happen if we were to lose more of our irrigation entitlements. It would devastate our districts, forcing huge numbers of PRODUCERS to move to our cities that are already bursting at the seams. Also Australia's food would have to be imported, raising the cost of food. Sooner or later, people have to realise, that with a growing population both in

Australia + across the world, each country has to produce their own food, because it is cheaper + fresher food + it provides employment for its people.

### Options for Water Saving measures

I'm no expert on water saving measures off farm, but I know on farm all irrigators have done a massive amount of laser grading + put in recycling works, which include Turkey Nest Dams (Storage dams) so that we re-use + don't waste one drop of our precious water resource. Also it stops water which may have contaminants such as fertilizers + chemicals in it from reaching our creeks + Rivers + contaminating them. A massive amount of trees have been planted on farm to form windbreaks, help with controlling water tables, provide shade for stock + habitat for wildlife. So you can see from within our districts we are always trying to improve our districts + to keep up with + implement the latest technologies + findings.

\* Role of Govt's, Ag Industry + research sector. No doubt Governments have a key role in the future of our Irrigation Valleys, but for once it has to be Balanced. Everyone, whether you're a farmer or towns person in our districts (We're all in this together) are sick of being treated like we're raping + pillaging our areas, when all everyone

is trying to do is produce food, produce jobs, help our areas + towns survive + prosper, pay our taxes, live an honest + good life. Yet in ~~the~~ all forms of the press, you'd think we were the worst people alive. We were all brought up being told that Australians give everyone a "Fair Go". I'd like to see that line of thinking return. Research + Development is the absolute key to everything. Whether it be new varieties of crops, new breeds of stock, types of irrigations structures. The list is never ending. We all live + die by R+D. That includes our River Systems as well. You can't just rip more water from a productive sector + flush it down the river willy-nilly. Engineering solutions as in pumps using new technologies eg Solar to lift water from rivers to water Red Crooms etc. Not just blast a massive amount of water down the River, doing untold damage to trees + causing erosion etc along the way.

I won't go on, but if for once we could get all <sup>relevant</sup> groups together using "truthful Science" + come up with a Balanced Solution I'm sure Our Rivers + Streams, along with our Irrigation Districts will not only survive but all will prosper. People forget, that when the environment is not receiving any water, we irrigators + our towns are not receiving any water either!

So to you Tony + your Committee, I'm sure you're fully aware that you've all been entrusted with a grave + massive responsibility to be fair to everyone. After the massive kicking our areas have received in the past 15-20 years, with Irrigation Water taken off our communities + then the prolonged Drought, we are all desperate to see some long awaited light at the end of the tunnel, because if this plan goes through as is, let alone the rumours of more water being taken later, the Murray Darling Basin is Doomed + that will have wide reaching + disastrous repercussions for all Australians!

For a non letter writer I've written a fair bit, but I hope you can see by my words how much our districts mean to everyone who lives + works within them, both directly + indirectly.

It is up to you all as a group, so for Australia please seek out the truth + do the right thing

Yours Sincerely  
Michael Burke