

# Speak Up Campaign Inc.

Inc 1800187

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**Hon Barnaby Joyce, MP**

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**Senator Matt Canavan**

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**Hon Damian Drum, MP**

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February 19, 2020

Dear Mr Joyce, Mr Canavan and Mr Drum,

We appreciate you are busy and under pressure, so we will cut to the chase.

The National Party is under severe pressure, of which you are well aware. From the perspective of our rural organisation the party is struggling to understand that rural communities want protection against issues which are being dominated by city-based Liberals and their progressive causes.

Our organisation from the start has not minced words in our determination to be a voice for rural communities, particularly in the Southern Basin. In our region The Nationals lost the state seat of Murray to the Shooters, Fishers & Farmers Party, and the Liberals suffered a very big swing against the sitting Member for Farrer Sussan Ley and almost lost the Mallee to an Independent. I think these results reflect the discontent being felt at the support we are getting from Coalition members.

However, The Nationals have an opportunity to regain the support that has been lost and return as the dominant party in our part of Australia. This could potentially mean regaining Farrer (lost in a three-corner contest when Tim Fischer retired) and the state seat of Murray.

However, only we believe only one issue can achieve this, and it is adopting policies that protect the Southern Basin from damage being caused by the Murray-Darling Basin Plan. Several years ago you visited our region and I am sure left with an idea of the frustrations being felt at this flawed plan and its implementation. Well, it's now much worse!

We have what we believe are achievable solutions that can protect the Southern Basin, stop the environmental damage that is being caused and return productivity to our region. There is an opportunity to right the wrongs that are crippling the nation's food bowl, but no-one has the political courage to address them.

When you were in Deniliquin as Water Minister you started the wheels in motion to highlight the fact that the volumes of water dictated under the Basin Plan could not be delivered to South Australia. It is a physical impossibility, but for political expedience we have a present culture that won't accept this undeniable fact. You also took on the SA Water Minister and we were all encouraged by your efforts and supported this level of leadership. Unfortunately the former Prime Minister did not like your strong stance in standing up for what is right.

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So, I would like to ask: What better time to take up the Basin Plan issues we are facing than right now? It could be an opportunity to go down in history on the right side of the debate before the Basin Plan plays out as the worst policy in our nation's history. It is heading down that path, and I don't believe that is an exaggeration.

We can provide you with numerous documents which show the necessary steps that can be taken to put Australia's water management back on track.

We would welcome a visit to our region where we can show you the damage under the current Basin Plan and the solutions that can 'fix the plan'.

Please feel free to contact me if there is a way we can work together to address the decline in our rural communities and move forward on Basin Plan issues.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shelley Scoullar". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Shelley Scoullar  
Speak Up Campaign  
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