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FEDERAL MEMBER FOR FLINDERS



SHADOW MINISTER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENT AND WATER

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Dear Colleague

Welcome to the latest edition of the *Flinders e-Newsletter*. It's been another busy month locally and in Canberra.

This edition contains significant developments regarding the Government's problematic home insulation program, the WA oil spill and the shut down of another solar program.

Locally, I defend the popular Chaplaincy program from possible closure, I back the cause of a family losing access to a vital school for the vision-impaired and speak about the enjoyable communities in the electorate.

Senate Inquiry into the Pink Batts Program

The Senate has agreed to my push for an inquiry into the Government's troubled \$2.7 billion insulation program.

First it was the waste, rotting, shoddy work and cost blow-outs. Now it's all the more serious, with one installer electrocuted and numerous others receiving serious shocks. Authorities have also issued warning after dozens of recent house fires started by incorrectly-installed ceiling insulation.

These articles in [The Daily Telegraph](#) and [Courier Mail](#) outline key problems, as does this report on [Radio National](#).

- Read the [media release](#).
- Listen to the interview with [Madonna King](#) on ABC Mornings in Brisbane and [Ray Hadley](#) in Sydney.
- See [the transcript](#) of the media conference after the inquiry was established.
- Even now, [we see](#) rotting in the PM's own electorate involving a rebate paid for a house being demolished.

Government out to a long lunch throughout the WA oil spill

Did Peter Garrett do enough in relation to the WA oil spill throughout the ten long weeks?

And why did the Government cover up revelations about a nearby gas leak for seven weeks? That's a question which the inquiry into this whole affair should look at.

I am glad the company was finally able to get the help it needed to put a stop to the leak and fire. But Peter Garrett must do more to tell Australians about the environmental damage that has occurred in our waters.

There has been a lack of ministerial leadership in this whole affair – as I said in [this interview](#) on ABC 2 on Monday and as [I wrote here](#) and argued in radio interviews with [Fran Kelly](#) and [Bruce Guthrie \(ABC 774\)](#).

Lights go out for Solar Schools

The Government has shut down another solar program – this time Solar Schools. It's been suspended until the second half of next year.

Peter Garrett failed to announce the suspension himself. He got his department to do the dirty work.

The ALP traded on solar energy before the election. But since then it has repeatedly worked against the solar industry, as outlined in detail in [this statement](#).

Time for constructive action on climate change

The announcement of the shutting of Solar Schools came on the eve of debate on the emissions trading scheme legislation.

Improving the proposed ETS legislation was the subject of a debate which I took part in [on Lateline](#).

You can also read my speech to parliament [here](#).

Threat to our popular Chaplaincy program

I am worried by reports that the Government is considering shutting down our chaplaincy program.

This is a successful national scheme which helps to provide guidance and purpose for our school kids.

It was a program I helped to develop and which grew from a pilot here on the Mornington Peninsula. Read more in [this statement](#).

In other local news this past month, I:

- [Took up the case](#) of a local family impacted by the closing of a school for the vision impaired.
 - Spoke in parliament in support of local communities at [Balnarring](#) and others on the [Mornington Peninsula](#).
 - Released the Spring edition of the [Flinders Community News](#).
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Traveston Dam D-Day looms

Peter Garrett is due to decide any day now on whether to approve the controversial Traveston Crossing dam.

It would impact on the very communities that Kevin Rudd used in a video – as I highlighted in [this video blog](#).

More reports condemn inaction on water infrastructure

While Mr Garrett is looking at considering a bad dam plan, his Water Minister is still having trouble approving any plans for water-saving infrastructure for the Murray-Darling.

The ongoing drought in infrastructure was confirmed in separate reports this month by [ACIL Tasman](#) and the [National Water Commission](#). Our food producers and environmentalists are becoming increasingly disillusioned.

For regular updates on what I'm doing around the electorate and in Canberra, you can [add me on Facebook](#) and [follow me on Twitter](#).

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Cheers



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