

# Media release

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## Legislation at last: must pass Senate

Murray Irrigation has welcomed the introduction of legislation to the Parliament to cap Commonwealth water buyback at 1,500GL, saying the Senate must pass the Bill that is supported by irrigators across the Murray-Darling Basin.

"Through our work with industry and irrigation representative bodies, we know this cap on buyback has the support of irrigators and irrigation communities in all states in the Basin," Murray Irrigation Chairman, Bruce Simpson said.

"This legislation will finally set in stone the commitment made by the Government before the last election. It has been a long time coming but it is extremely welcome.

Mr Simpson commended local Member, Sussan Ley for her continued push to see the promise become law.

"Sussan Ley has been pushing this cap even before the Basin Plan became law under the previous Government and her steadfastness has finally paid off," he said.

"I also acknowledge the commitment by the Minister for the Environment, Greg Hunt, and his Parliamentary Secretary, Bob Baldwin MP, for understanding the importance of this legislation and to delivering a Basin Plan that addresses the needs of communities across the Murray-Darling Basin.

"Mr Baldwin came to our area and was told that buyback must be the recovery option of last resort and that we expected the Coalition to deliver on their promise to legislate a cap. He clearly took that message back to Canberra.

The legislation must pass the Senate before it becomes law and Murray Irrigation is now calling on Senator Madigan and his fellow cross benchers and the Labor Party to support it so communities can have some certainty.

"Senator Madigan came to Deniliquin and asked what we wanted and he was told unequivocally that we want a cap on buyback," Mr Simpson said.

"He will now have an opportunity to deliver for our communities by voting for this legislation.

"Labor also need to get on board to support all of the workers in regional communities who rely on irrigated agriculture for their livelihoods.

"For communities, buyback is the worst form of water recovery because it takes water out of the consumptive pool and reduces a regions productive capacity.

"With a cap in place, the Government can focus on better managing their water portfolio and investing where there is need rather than untargeted buyback.

Ends.

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