Executive Officer
Environment and Natural Resources Committee
Parliament House
Spring Street
East Melbourne VIC 3002

Honourable Members of the Committee,

I am very concerned about the recent decisions for water supply, especially the large desalination plant, and the dubious pipeline that will threaten Bendigo's water supply.

The Desalination plant would use so much electricity that all our light-bulb changes would be could not offset the carbon used to generate the water.

The government claim that it would use renewable energy is disingenuous as that energy is needed elsewhere to replace coal-fired electricity to power industry.

Solar power is currently used to evaporate ocean water which falls as rain in our catchments.

Stopping logging in catchments would increase run-off.

The investment in the plant would be very costly, especially if there is a La-Nina event and the reservoirs fill. Costly both financially and in terms of CO2 emissions.

The large investment in plant would encourage the owners to sell more Water. The philosophy behind an ETS assumes that Governments can't pick winners. In a similar sense the Government should tender for the required Giga-litres and see what solutions the market proposes.
If the desal plant is less costly than piping from Tasmania or Rainwater tanks or storm water collection, or even more dams in appropriate places then the market would decide. At the very least, a business justification or feasibility should be done to compare these options. This also needs to evaluation the environmental effects of any proposal.

How can commercially produced water compete with rainwater unless rainwater is also privatised and sold as the same "product" and the same price to consumers.

Water could be pumped from Tasmanian hydro schemes or gravity fed across the shallow Bass Straight with less impact than a desalination plant. The committee should call for a full feasibility study of the options.

Sincerely,

Chris Goodman