Robyn Preston
Member for Hawkesbury

MEDIA STATEMENT

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CALL TO EXPAND RIVERWATCH TO HAWKESBURY RIVER

Member for Hawkesbury, Robyn Preston is calling on the NSW Government to expand Sydney Water's RiverWatch Water Quality Monitoring Program to the Hawkesbury River, to give local families clarity about when it is safe to swim.

Following Ms Preston's invitation for community feedback on the prospect of a beach jetty pool in the Hawkesbury River at North Richmond nicknamed 'Hondi', it became clear that residents sought water quality information as a priority.

RiverWatch currently provides science-based, real-time information on water quality in parts of Sydney, helping the public understand pollution risks - particularly after rainfall, when contamination levels can rise.

Ms Preston said the Hawkesbury community deserves the same level of transparency.

"Families across Hawkesbury regularly swim, kayak and enjoy our river, but too often they are left guessing whether the water is safe - especially after rain," Ms Preston said.

"Programs like RiverWatch monitor key indicators such as bacteria, turbidity and temperature and translate that data into clear public advice like 'pollution unlikely' or 'pollution likely'."

Ms Preston said expanding the program would align with national water safety guidelines and give residents confidence to safely enjoy the river, paving the way for a 'Hondi' jetty pool.

"I have asked the Government to outline what monitoring is currently in place and whether it will commit to delivering a RiverWatch style program for Hawkesbury."

Modern predictive modelling and real-time monitoring technologies could play a key role in improving public access to reliable water quality information.

"Other parts of Sydney already benefit from this level of reporting, it's time Hawkesbury did too."

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