Premier Mike Rann told Parliament he knew "first-hand that former premier Don Dunstan thought very highly of Gabe". Mr Dunstan had made his admission clear in his 1983 memoirs Feltsch, writing: "Gabe Bywaters was also articulate, able and determined. He was a lay preacher of the Church of Christ, and campaigned and canvassed hard and was soon extremely popular in the Baywater." Mr Dunstan had also said of Mr Bywaters' ministerial work: "In the agriculture portfolio, Gabe Bywaters was an outstandingly good minister and made decisions which were difficult but necessary."

Mr Rann said Mr Bywaters had been "a very decent man, 30 lonely, often bitter old men turned to us and said: ‘You should be doing this.’" He had been a member of the Parliamentary Party for 15 years and had been a member of the Government for 13 years. He had been a member of the Opposition for 15 years and had been a member of the Government for 13 years. He had been a member of the Government for 13 years and had been a member of the Government for 13 years.

Opposition Leader Rob Kerin said that throughout Mr Bywaters' parliamentary career, he had continually pushed for more industry and housing in regional areas and for incentives to encourage business to relocate from Adelaide.

"He was very concerned with what he saw as the inequities that those in country towns had to endure, and those hardships were typified by the great River Murray flood of 1963 which impacted significantly on the people of Murray Bridge and led Mr Bywaters to comment that this event brought him into contact with his constituents in a way that he would never forget," Mr Kerin said.

Mr Bywaters' wife, Gwenn, died three years ago. He is survived by a son, daughter, four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

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