

~~cannot afford this illness. We all need to do something about it. We need massive change and we need to demand change from all governments—act now!~~

~~Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! The time for Matters of Public Interest has expired.~~

## ELECTRICITY (EARLY TERMINATION) AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction



**Hon. MF McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (12.00 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Electricity Act 1994 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Electricity (Early Termination) Amendment Bill 2012.

*Tabled paper:* Electricity (Early Termination) Amendment Bill 2012, explanatory notes.

This bill supports this government's commitment to lower the cost of living for Queenslanders by making it easier for residential and small customers to terminate market contracts with their electricity retailer where their prices have gone up beyond the notified tariffs. The recent behaviour of some retailers in increasing prices, despite the government's tariff freeze, is outrageous. Market contracts are intended to provide retailers with certainty of business and the consumer with cheaper than notified prices, not lock customers into more costly arrangements.

This bill is going to make it unlawful for retailers to charge customers an early-termination fee if they inform customers their charges are rising above notified prices. I am determined to give small customers that have market contracts in place at the moment and future customers who go to the market the opportunity to assess their individual circumstances and exercise choice about whether they stay on, change back to a standard contract with regulated tariffs or switch to another retailer if the price rises become too hard to sustain.

In addition to the bill, the government is taking steps to adjust the price-freeze subsidy to ensure that retailers that charge a domestic customer above the notified tariff 11 price do not receive the price-freeze subsidy for this customer. To restate simply, this means that a retailer who charges more than the notified tariff 11 price will not receive any subsidy funded by the taxpayer for the government's freeze on tariff 11. As with the freeze on the domestic tariff 11, this is just another way that the government is helping Queenslanders who are doing it tough and need protection. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading



**Hon. MF McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (12.01 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### Referral to the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Robinson): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee.

## ~~SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND WATER (DISTRIBUTION AND RETAIL RESTRUCTURING) AMENDMENT BILL~~

~~Resumed from 19 June (see p. 747).~~

### ~~Second Reading~~



~~**Hon. MF McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (12.02 pm): I move—~~

~~That the bill be now read a second time.~~

~~The South East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Amendment Bill 2012 seeks to remove the special industrial relations measures, including the workforce frameworks, which were in place by the former government. The government determined to act quickly on this matter.~~