

her watch. That is the kind of government we get from those opposite. They are all about rhetoric and are happy to put costs through the roof at twice the inflation rate, putting pressure on families.

Government members interjected.

Mr EMERSON: They do not like it when the truth is put to them, but that is the reality. We know that Labor is great on rhetoric, while unfortunately Queenslanders suffer all the time. Today we saw the figures from the ABS. What have they delivered? The second worst unemployment rate in Australia! People are without jobs because of Labor's policies. They do not like that being pointed out to them. They want to talk about jobs and they want to talk about the fact that they are helping poor families, but the reality is that our unemployment rate is the second worst in Australia. This is the worst year ever in Queensland's history. The cost of living is going through the roof. Registration fees are going up. Time and time again they have had the chance to keep the cost of registration in line with the inflation rate, and yet again in this budget they have squibbed it. It will not happen next year or the year after. It will not happen until 2019.

Today, we saw a very clear distinction. The LNP government understood the pressures that families are under. We understood that families cannot tolerate fees going up so fast and so hard, and the pressures that puts on them. That is why we announced today that an LNP government would freeze family car registration for the next three years. We will freeze it; they will ramp it up year after year after year. They want to hit hard those families that are struggling.

Government members interjected.

Mr EMERSON: I love it when they interject, because I know that they are feeling the pain of this and they know the problems. I see the member for Murrumba who is supposed to be the member for Mount Coot-tha, but he has run miles away. What does this budget deliver for the area that he is supposed to be still working for? Not much!

A government member interjected.

Mr EMERSON: I am just about to get to that. Again, he has failed his own area. He has run away from it. The member for Mount Coot-tha is not only running away from his electorate; he has abandoned it. Not much has been delivered for his area. While I appreciate the funding for extra classrooms at Indooroopilly State High School, there is not much else for my area. When I look at what has been delivered for my area, there is not much at all. Infrastructure spending is down in inner Brisbane generally. It is pretty hard that the member has run away from his own seat. People ask me, 'Why is he going miles away? Why has he gone 40 kilometres away? Isn't he committed to his community?' Clearly not! When we see today's budget, we know why. He has failed to deliver for his seat. Does he even care about the seat he is still supposed to be representing? This is a disgraceful effort. Labor has abandoned Queensland and the member has abandoned the seat he is still supposed to be representing. What a disgrace across the state. >

Debate, on motion of Mr Emerson, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm.

022

<PRIVILEGE

Comments by Member for Everton, Withdrawal and Apology



Mr MANDER (Everton—LNP) (2.30 pm): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. In the last sitting of parliament I was involved in a debate about the juvenile justice system. I made some comments about the Attorney-General and ascribed some comments to her which at the time I thought were accurate. Upon reflection and trying to research that source, I realise I was incorrect. I want to apologise to the Attorney-General and the House, because I withdraw those comments unreservedly. >

<ELECTRICITY AND OTHER LEGISLATION (BATTERIES AND PREMIUM FEED-IN TARIFF) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction



Hon. MC BAILEY (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (2.31 pm <): I present a bill for an act to amend the >Electricity Act 1994 and the Energy and Water Ombudsman Act 2006 for particular purposes. I table the bill and explanatory notes. I nominate the Public Works and Utilities Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill 2017.

Tabled paper: Electricity and Other Legislation (Batteries and Premium Feed-in Tariff) Amendment Bill 2017, explanatory notes.

The bill clarifies the regulatory arrangements for how batteries and additional generation can work alongside the Solar Bonus Scheme. The bill also makes it easier for embedded network customers to access the competitive retail market. Queensland has one of the world's highest rates of uptake for small-scale solar power, which is installed in around one in three households. The Solar Bonus Scheme played a pivotal role in driving this solar uptake at an early stage. While the scheme has closed to new customers, we are still seeing strong demand for small-scale solar as renewable technology prices continue to fall and customers look to take greater control over their energy use. We are also seeing rapid growth in the development of complementary technologies such as battery storage. Battery storage has the potential to give customers even more control over their usage and provide other benefits to the network.

Queensland government policies which support the transition to a cleaner energy sector, including our commitment to 50 per cent renewables by 2030, one million solar rooftops or 3,000 megawatt commitment, and the actions set out in the Powering Queensland Plan, help add to this demand and development of the clean energy sector. The provisions of this bill further demonstrate the government's commitment to supporting a clean energy future for Queensland. The amendments in the bill clarify how batteries and additional generation can work alongside the Solar Bonus Scheme while preserving the original intent of the scheme.

The scheme was designed so that generation from a qualifying generator would be used in customers' homes and businesses first, with any excess beyond normal consumption to be exported. It is proposed that these provisions commence retrospectively from the date of introduction today. The government has not made this decision lightly; however, this is necessary to minimise opportunities for customers to unfairly profit from ambiguity in the law while the bill is considered. Transitional provisions will preserve the rights of those who have invested or contracted to invest in equipment under the legislation in place at the time of introduction.

The bill retains our commitment to the Solar Bonus Scheme and provides a fair solution for Solar Bonus Scheme customers who wish to embrace new technologies. Changes to the National Electricity Rules which apply in Queensland will come into effect on 1 December 2017. These changes will clarify the regulatory arrangements for retail competition in embedded networks and make it easier for embedded network customers to choose an alternative electricity supplier. Embedded network customers are those customers who purchase their electricity from an embedded network operator such as a body corporate, caravan park owner or a shopping centre. With the increasing popularity of embedded networks in recent years, it is important that customers within these networks have the ability to choose the price and price structure of the electricity service that suits them best and are able to easily access government schemes and consumer protections. The new rule does not prevent embedded network operators from continuing to sell electricity to embedded network customers; however, it will provide them with a greater incentive to compete with retailers.

To support the changes, it is necessary to amend the Electricity Act 1994 to remove the legislative barrier that restricts competition for embedded network customers and ensure there is no inconsistency with the national framework. This bill will also ensure that eligible embedded network customers who decide to purchase their electricity from a chosen retailer will have access to the free dispute resolution services of the Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland, just as direct customers can. I commend the bill to the House.

~~First Reading~~

~~Hon. MC BAILEY (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (2.36 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 Public Works and Utilities Committee~~

~~Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Public Works and Utilities Committee.~~