



Speech by

**Mr M. HORAN**

**MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA SOUTH**

---

Hansard 31 May 2001

#### **ETHANOL**

**Mr HORAN** (Toowoomba South—NPA) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.10 a.m.): In light of the fact that Queensland continues to run last in the unemployment stakes, the National Party would like to put forward a very positive and exciting proposal to improve employment prospects in Queensland, help the environment and provide for import replacement. I refer to a proposal by the Petro Group to develop a pilot ethanol plant on the Darling Downs using the corn crop. If successful, this proposal could have enormous benefits for areas such as the Burnett, Wide Bay, Emerald, Bowen, the Burdekin and the Atherton Tableland. It is a very exciting proposal to use some 53,000 tonnes of corn per annum, which would produce 20 million litres of fuel, 16,000 tonnes of feedlot distilled grains and a very substantial amount of carbon dioxide for industrial usages.

There is a wonderful chance for the government to get behind this proposal in the way that it got behind Virgin Airlines. Here is a Queensland born and bred proposal which has so many benefits in terms of job creation, economic activity, import replacement and a better environment through a better blend of fuels in motor vehicles. The United States is now the second-largest producer of ethanol in the world. Many of the vehicles there are running on 10 per cent ethanol. If ever there were a project that could complement the pilot projects in north Queensland and by BP in Brisbane—those two projects are supported by the Commonwealth government—then this is it. This proposal could be good news for rural and regional Queensland and could help improve the dreadful job statistics that we have.

I urge the Premier and the Minister for State Development to get behind this project. It is a good project. It is a Queensland project. It is logical, it is practical and it will bring enormous benefits to this state. Particularly, it could provide job opportunities for young Queenslanders throughout regional Queensland. Of course, the added bonus is the boost to the environment.

Time expired.

---