



Speech by

Pat Purcell

MEMBER FOR BULIMBA

Hansard Tuesday, 23 November 2004

ELECTRICITY AMENDMENT BILL; ELECTRICITY AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 2)

Mr PURCELL (Bulimba—ALP) (8.18 p.m.): I rise to support both of these bills. In speaking to the first bill, which relates to making gas a requirement for the generation of power in Queensland, I think that that will make use of an energy source that, to this point in Queensland, has been wasted. We mine the coal and we let the gas escape. We do not use it. Certainly, as the previous speaker said, that process of using that gas will generate a lot of jobs—where those energy processing places are set up and along the pipelines that pipe the gas to the power stations.

Mr Rowell interjected.

Mr PURCELL: And the sugar mills and any other industry that wants to use that energy. So this process will be a job-generating exercise. Also, having a gas base load power station in Townsville will make sure that there is a gas industry. Swanbank 2 will be looking to tap into the gas reserves that Queensland has at the moment.

Possibly the only thing we will be looking for at some point in the future is an increase on the level of 13 per cent, because other gas reserves will be made available to Queensland. Queensland would have probably the best coal technology of anywhere in Australia. The most recently built power station here in Queensland has probably the lowest level of greenhouse gas emissions from coal of any power station in the country. With our growing population, the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions is very important into the future. I think other states should catch up with what we are doing.

This bill contains provisions relating to employees' conditions being able to be transferred between GOCs. I think that is a sensible thing that should happen not only for the electricity industry but also for other industries. It makes it easier for employees to move around. I think job satisfaction is very important, so if people want to move they should be able to take their conditions with them and this encourages them to do so.

Electricity Amendment Bill (No. 2) relates to the conditions Energex will have to meet. I think that is a way to improve the services and efficiency of that body. In relation to service levels, complaints from constituents with regard to how Energex deals with them indicate that things have not been good over the years. This will get Energex to sharpen its pencils and make sure it does listen to what people have to say so that when it gives a commitment to do something it goes ahead and does it. The regulator making sure that these standards are met will give people confidence that this bill will achieve what it sets out to achieve. With those few words, I support the bill.