



Speech by

Liz Cunningham

MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE

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CLIMATE CHANGE

Mrs CUNNINGHAM (Gladstone—Ind) (6.05 pm): I rise to speak to this motion and to the amendment that was moved by the Premier. The community has always expressed concerns about quality of life issues. One of those issues has been climate change—the warming of the environment, temperature increases and their impact on quality of life. A Queensland Conservation Council document states—

Climate change means a change in rainfall patterns across the State, a dramatic rise in average temperatures and more severe weather conditions. These changes will fundamentally alter our way of life by changing the environmental conditions upon which we depend.

I am sure those comments encapsulate people's concerns in general about their future and that of their families. Equally, there are those who dismiss the entire notion of global warming as climatic cycles. However, I believe that, as time goes on, more and more people are seeing that there have been significant changes in temperature, in the cycle of wet seasons and dry seasons, and are taking much more notice of information that is available to them.

Major industry is usually the centre of criticism for greenhouse gases, along with motor vehicle use and power stations. I found an article on nuclear power titled 'Nuclear power: no solution to climate change' very interesting. It states—

There are significant constraints on the growth of nuclear power, such as its high capital cost and, in many countries, lack of public acceptability. As a method of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, nuclear power is further limited because it is used almost exclusively for electricity generation, which is responsible for less than one third of global greenhouse gas emissions.

I think that is an important point to note in the current climate where we have a Prime Minister who is pushing nuclear power quite significantly. We need to have an Australia-wide debate on the issue to ensure that the true facts of nuclear power—its risks and advantages—are properly advised of and that people are properly informed.

In an article in today's *Gladstone Observer*, Lee McIvor presented an audit of industries in my electorate. I would have to say that most of those industries are working to reduce both their greenhouse and other gaseous emissions. I refer to the editorial by the editor of the *Gladstone Observer*, Mat Ovenden, in relation to that article. It states—

While Australia has been targeted for not signing the agreement—
that is the Kyoto agreement—

it's often ignored that our country is among the leaders in developing greener industries.

It would be very easy to sign a piece of paper so Australia could be seen by the rest of the world as responding to the global warming issue.

It seems everyone has a theory about the future doom of our planet.

And it also seems there are very few people that agree on how severe it is.

One week we've got 10 years to live, another week we've got 100 years to live and another week the whole global warming theory is plastered as an over-exaggeration.

I don't for a second agree with the latter, but until everyone can agree on the effect industry is having on global warming, no outcomes or cooperation will be achieved.

Despite the propaganda, signing the Kyoto Protocol will do nothing for Australia, particularly Central Queensland.

And while Australia has been targeted for not signing the agreement, it's often ignored that our country is among the leaders in developing greener industries.

Our time and money should be spent on continuing to develop these technologies as opposed to sitting in boardrooms, debating whose signature appears on the agreement.

Our responsibility is to make decisions that benefit our community, our children and their children. I reiterate Mat's closing sentiment: we need to actively work for achievable solutions, and not merely discuss theories and blame others.