



Speech by

**Jann Stuckey**

**MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN**

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## **VOLUNTARY CARBON CREDIT TRADING BILL**

**Mrs STUCKEY** (Currumbin—Lib) (9.13 pm): I rise to speak in the debate on the Voluntary Carbon Credit Trading Bill, a private member's bill introduced into the Queensland parliament by the honourable member for Moggill. In doing so I wish to congratulate him on his initiative. As we have just heard from the honourable member for Caloundra, we do not actually hear or see much but criticism from members opposite with regard to new ideas.

This bill looks to create a carbon credit trading exchange as a way of significantly combating greenhouse gas emissions and would provide certification on a voluntary basis to corporations and enterprises which reduce carbon emissions in three ways. I know the House has already heard these, but I will reinforce them. They include sequestration such as forestry, or geosequestration and power produced from low or zero emission industries. A third category of credits would be available after certification for traditional power sources able to demonstrate reduced per unit emissions.

There has been much in the media recently with regard to climate change and along with it the issue of carbon credits. In fact, just last weekend we saw a front-page story in local newspapers about a farmer who has become a millionaire almost overnight through signing a deal with a major company seeking to gain carbon credits. We have heard from many members in this debate, and we all agree, that we have a responsibility to be taking steps to reduce our greenhouse emissions.

This bill would permit certification for corporations and enterprises which reduce carbon emissions on a voluntary basis. Additionally, these companies will be able to publicise their voluntary commitment to carbon trading credits. It is important to reward companies that use technology innovation and other means to reduce their emissions substantially and demonstrate legitimate environmental credentials.

In order to ensure the success of this initiative we must generate positive interest from customers to purchase these carbon credits and then we need to inspire a strong market for the credits that these environmental investors wish to sell. Many small, medium and large companies would be in a position to take up the offer of buying enough credits to offset greenhouse gases emitted by their respective businesses or industries. Additionally, individuals will be given the opportunity to counterbalance the greenhouse gases emitted by their electricity and gas consumption and usage of motor vehicles in a similar way to the green option that was offered by Energex. If implemented this bill would allow Queensland to lead the way in carbon trading schemes in Australia.

I would like to take a few moments to inform the House of a project in the Currumbin electorate which has been awarded, amongst many other commendations, the 2007 Urban Development Institute of Australia National Award for Excellence—Australia's Best Environmental Development. Renowned as Queensland's finest example of sustainable urban development, the Ecovillage in Currumbin Valley offers something inspirational—the chance to live a natural lifestyle within a community atmosphere.

The first of its kind in Queensland, if not Australia, the Ecovillage is a great example of reducing greenhouse emissions and has sustainability as its goal. Its concept embraces the land instead of pillaging it and includes over 80 per cent as open space with approximately 50 per cent as flora and fauna reserves. Ecohamlet planning allows for a social mix with a variety of home parcel sizes and prices contained within

each precinct. This development is the first in Queensland to voluntarily—and I use the word ‘voluntarily’—disconnect from the main water supply and be totally water self-sufficient and requires homes to have solar power for heating water and gas-only appliances. Interestingly, there is a mandatory ecovision resource monitoring system in each home which monitors gas, electricity and water levels and consumption.

Other specifications for those wishing to live in this tranquil place are building materials are strictly covenanted to be as renewable as possible; slab on the ground building is prohibited so as not to change the topography and hydrology of the site; no bricks or tiles are allowed inside or out; a mandatory thermal mass component in every home, for warming in winter and cooling in summer; the use of cross ventilation; natural lighting and use of energy efficient light fittings; solar hot water with gas backup; a minimum 1.2 kilowatt photovoltaic system in each home; the correct solar orientation of the building on site with consideration of the solar orientation of neighbouring sites meaning that all buildings face north; and no wood fires, only gas heating. This development, I am sure members would agree, certainly demonstrates how we can all do our share to reduce these harmful emissions.

But back to this bill. An important aspect of the success of this bill will be the robustness and credibility of any assessment processes associated with the calculation of emission reductions. Like any assessment process we need to be assured of verifiability and consistency of measurements. The quality of the certification sets a new standard.

Other benefits of this bill include the creation of a greenhouse emission reduction program that is not based on government regulation forcing emission reduction and imposing penalties. This is contrary to the comments from the member for Indooroopilly who endorses Labor’s bullying culture. We on this side of the House engage in a spirit of cooperation.

The bill does not impose heavy costs on government to subsidise the investment in emission reduction programs by entities. The fact that this scheme will require specialised knowledge and skills makes it highly likely that this will foster the emergence of a new industry for Queensland and, of course, new jobs.

We need to take the first steps to advance clean coal technologies, and this bill has the potential to open the door for environmentally sustainable ways of dealing with greenhouse gases to become a major growth industry for the state. Here is an opportunity for Queensland to lead the way towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions by establishing a carbon credit trading exchange, and I encourage members on the other side of the House to support this bill in a bipartisan approach. We have heard members opposite criticise aspects of this bill and this is indeed a great pity, as this bill is a small yet significant step in the right direction. I applaud the efforts of the honourable member for Moggill and I commend the bill to the House.