



Speech by

# Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Thursday, 6 September 2007

---

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Clean Coal

**Hon. PD BEATTIE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.36 am): It is well known in this House that my government is committed to combating climate change and at the heart of that commitment is clean coal technology. We are putting our money where our mouth is. Together with industry we are investing \$900 million in the development of clean coal technology. I was pleased to report to the House earlier this week that ZeroGen, the Queensland project investigating the use of a coal based gasification plant integrated with carbon capture and storage, has been successful in its first stage of testing.

So I must admit I was somewhat surprised yesterday to hear that the Prime Minister has committed \$15 million to the American FutureGen project. I want to be clear: I support the American FutureGen project and have said so in this House, and I certainly welcome the announcement. Queensland is also partnering with FutureGen and its clean coal technology development. However, I hope it is only part of the equation when it comes to the Prime Minister finally doing something about climate change. ZeroGen has approached the Commonwealth government on a number of occasions for funding support and has been knocked back every time.

It is all very well to support FutureGen, which I do, but I say to the Prime Minister: where is the money for clean coal technology in Australia? Why is he not funding the project here? I have to say that there is an enormous sense of frustration about this. It is all very well to grandstand prior to a federal election—and I understand that, too—but we need to do more projects than just FutureGen. Yes, let us support FutureGen, but let us support Australian projects as well.

In March 2006 an application for support from the Low Emissions Technology Development Fund was made and, despite funding a brown coal gasification project in Victoria, the Commonwealth Government would not provide any funds for ZeroGen.

A revised business case was submitted in February this year and despite further detailed information being provided in May the Commonwealth Government has still not provided any response.

So Mr Speaker, if the Prime Minister is really serious about investing in clean coal technology and the future of the coal industry in Queensland and other states—I hope he plans to dig much deeper into his pocket and use a bigger slice of his \$17 billion surplus to help us develop this technology.

While it is encouraging that the Prime Minister is finally recognising its importance, he is well aware that \$15 million will do very little to progress what is a complex and cutting edge technology.

I am also at a loss to understand why he still fails to recognise the importance of developing the technology here in Australia—in Australian conditions, using Australian coal and creating Australian jobs—to ensure we are at the forefront of clean coal technology development and implementation.

Let's be clear about this—Queensland has 300 years worth of coal left in the ground and an industry that employs 13,000 Queenslanders. Clean coal technology is critical to securing these jobs.

I look forward to the Smart State benefiting from the Prime Minister's new-found-interest in climate change and call on him to match Queensland's \$300 million investment in home-grown clean coal technology.

Anything less would be scandalous.