




Speech By  
**Curtis Pitt**

**MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE**

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**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Electricity Prices**

 **Mr PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (2.48 pm): There has been much said by the Newman government and the LNP about electricity pricing but so very little done. This financial year Queenslanders have experienced an increase of 22.6 per cent on average on their electricity bill. This is the biggest increase on record and follows an average increase of 11 per cent last financial year. It means that electricity bills are rising on average by more than \$400 a household in the first two years of the LNP in government. This was after the Premier promised at the election to lower electricity bills by \$120 a year on average. The cost of actually delivering this commitment to 1.8 million tariff 11 households would have been approximately \$1.17 billion over the first two years. The Premier and Treasurer simply do not have a clue as to how to cost policy, and they got their numbers wrong. They were not even close. They were way out of the ballpark.

Again, we need to make sure that we talk about what has happened with electricity price rises. I will spell it out again for those government members who continue to blame the carbon tax or any initiatives designed to help the environment for this government's failures.

In reality, if there were no other factors contributing to electricity price rises other than green initiatives, the average increase would be just three per cent, not a record 22.6 per cent. While this LNP government has monumentally mishandled the management of electricity pricing in Queensland, there is price relief ahead despite the LNP. As set out in the budget papers, the rooftop solar capacity the Premier hates with such vehemence has added 500 megawatts of capacity to the electricity grid which has deferred the need for investment in a new power station in Queensland.

The LNP has also quietly accepted the recommendations of the second Somerville review undertaken by the previous government in December 2011. This review identified \$1.5 billion in savings to the electricity network which will flow through to lower prices over the coming years. Not surprisingly, the LNP's record hike for electricity prices is forecast by the Australian Energy Market Operator in its latest report to lead to lower energy consumption this financial year. This means that Queenslanders will be turning off their lights and going without a hot cup of tea to survive the LNP's electricity price hikes.

Interestingly, the Australian Energy Market Operator also forecast that residential and commercial energy consumption per person will continue to fall. In 2011-12 residential and commercial energy consumption per person was 8,272 kilowatts in Queensland. Over the next four years, residential and commercial energy consumption is forecast to fall to 7,740 kilowatts per person. This will lead to continued lower demand for investment in the electricity network. It is a fall in consumption from the grid that in part reflects increased uptake of solar and energy efficient building standards. I think it is important to place on the public record all of this information as the LNP will no doubt continue with its dishonesty on electricity pricing over coming years. It will try to claim credit for lower consumption per person flowing through to lower prices—claim credit for the uptake of solar that it simultaneously criticises and to claim credit for the savings initiatives implemented by the former Labor government.