




Speech By
Curtis Pitt

MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE

MOTION: CARBON TAX

 **Mr PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (11.13 am): It is wonderful to have another distracting, diverting, deflecting motion moved in this House by this LNP government after a shocking question time in which their health minister did not know what he was talking about. He had no idea until it was googled for him about three or four questions later. Of course, then he realised, 'They might have something here.' Maybe one of his advisers still has stockholm syndrome and just was not on the ball early enough today; I do not know. We will have to ask that question.

When we look at the fact that there have been not one, not two, but three Health payroll motions in this House—all an attempt to distract from whatever the issue of the day is—we continue to see this government using this House as its plaything. It is all about trying to deflect and distract attention from whatever bad-news story there might be. You would think that, after the weekend's federal election result they would be able to say that the people have spoken about this issue. That is, of course, not always the case in elections. Winning an election does not always give a party a mandate on every issue that it runs on. Ultimately, this is another case of this government using this House for whatever political purposes it wants.

Let's think about a few things. This is the same government that is responsible for the cost-of-living rises here in Queensland which they said they would control. They said they would control them; they promised the people of Queensland before the last election that they had it all sorted; they had all the answers. They have overseen a 22.6 per cent price rise in electricity. This is an absurdity. Not content with having that price rise, they then decided to tell everyone a misnomer about it for many months—almost as long as Tony Abbott managed to keep his approach to attacking everything in such a negative way. They decided they would continue that in government. They said that all of the green schemes were responsible for the price rise. However, when you look at it, if you put all of those things in there and if you include things other than the green initiatives, the price rise would have been about three per cent but the rest of it is down to this government. This government has overseen a price rise of biblical proportions.

This morning we saw the health minister standing up. During his time as opposition leader he was a GFC denier. He just did not believe it happened. Now we see that not only this government but now the federal Abbott government are climate change deniers. They just do not think it is real. We know they do not think it is real because when you look at their direct action approach there is no market mechanism except for the goodwill and some good ideas that might come out of business to look at sustainability. There is no way that they are going to be able to control what big business is doing. This is all about supporting polluters to get on and make more money. It is not about meeting any targets. It is all about this government trying to suggest that they have a better approach. The rest of the world seems to think that carbon based schemes or emissions trading schemes have some merit, and we know that this government has no idea. That is very frightening because this shows again that they are climate change deniers.

When the current Premier was in City Hall—and he was talking in 2009—he was actually going on about the importance of the council's plan for action on climate change and energy, and he had a climate change and energy task force. He was determined to make Brisbane Australia's most sustainable city by running low emissions buses, planting trees, having a bike share program and buying renewable energy. I do not know, but it sounds an awful lot like he believes in climate change. Yet, ultimately, what he has come up with in this motion moved by the Treasurer is something that flies in the face of the action that was being taken. As I understand it, emissions have been reduced under this scheme already. This is a direct reason why we may be looking at some other schemes put before the House today.

If this government wanted to do something for miners, they might not have jacked up royalties in their first budget. That is one of the key reasons we are seeing job losses not the carbon tax, which they have tried to make out was the cause. Maybe you could argue they have been a little successful in that, but guess what? Prime Minister-elect Tony Abbott is now going to have to do a hell of a lot more than use three-word slogans. He has gotten away with being a negative, small-target opposition leader for nearly four years and now he is going to have to do much more than 'scrap the carbon tax' and 'stop the boats'. The pressure is going to be on him. He is now going to have to deliver on his promise. I can guarantee that they will not be as effective as what we have seen under a previous Labor government. Direct action does not stack up when compared to a carbon tax or an emissions trading scheme.