



Speech By
Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR DALRYMPLE

ELECTRICITY PRICES

Mr KNUTH (Dalrymple—KAP) (9.05 pm): Last week the government announced a hike in electricity prices, which will see farmers paying an extra \$5,000 to \$10,000 a year for electricity. The Queensland Farmers Federation attributed the hike in electricity costs to the inherited policies of the former government. However, I would like to remind the House that when the Electricity Price Reform Amendment Bill 2011 was debated, the LNP voted with Labor to restructure the way electricity pricing was determined in Queensland and paved the way for the energy sector to pass on the federal Labor government's carbon tax directly to consumers.

Obviously, they were anticipating being in government and knew that the regulatory risk of a carbon tax would scare away a potential buyer when it came time to sell our energy assets. The LNP also privatised the retail arm of the energy sector, which saw the Competition and Consumer Commission make the decisions on price regulations. It used to be the minister who set the prices, but the LNP supported that move to ensure that you have to go back—

Mr Johnson: You were a part of it.

Mr KNUTH: That is right, and that is why I am here and you are there, Vaughan.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Member for Dalrymple, take your seat. Member for Gregory, I warn you. You are not interjecting from your seat. I call the member for Dalrymple.

Mr KNUTH: They passionately voted for the privatisation of the retail arm of our energy sector, which now sees a massive price rise for electricity consumers. Although they are blaming the Labor Party, they also supported Labor and passionately did so. The Treasurer was frothing at the mouth in his determination that not only should we privatise the retail arm of our energy sector, but also we should sell everything. That was back in 2006 and they supported it. Despite the fact that they point the finger, the evidence is there. It is all in *Hansard*. They can look it up. Peter Costello has given the Treasurer and the Premier the ammunition they need to continue with the plan to privatise the energy sector. The argument that the Treasurer and the Deputy Premier—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr KNUTH: Meanwhile, the LNP continuously fought and attacked the government of the day for its decisions. It opposed the sale of Queensland Rail and the sale of the ports. It said that this was hypocritical. It said how terrible it was, that it was low and disgusting. What is the LNP going to do now? Sell the energy sector! Sell our ports! Sell our profitable assets! It is the people of Queensland who have fought. It is the taxpayers' hard work that contributed to this—

(Time expired).

A government member: Is that why you ran away?

Mr KNUTH: I hope you do, too, and take a stand for your electorate.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Member for Dalrymple, take your seat.