




Speech By  
**Curtis Pitt**

**MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE**

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Record of Proceedings, 11 February 2014

**MOTION: REDCLIFFE ELECTORATE**

 **Mr PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (6.04 pm): Almost two years ago this government went to the election promising to lower the cost of living in Redcliffe. The Premier promised to slash household bills. He promised that families would be given a break. In his so-called ‘contract with Queensland’ the Premier could not have been clearer. He said he would ‘lower the cost of living for families’. How that hollow, cynical pledge has come crashing down for all Queenslanders, but for none more so than the long-suffering people of Redcliffe. Not only have the 50,000-plus people who call Redcliffe home been forced to go through 18 months of non-representation courtesy of the Premier’s own captain’s pick, Scott Driscoll, not only have they been forced to wait three months for this Premier to allow them to vote to choose a new representative, but they have been slugged with some of the biggest cost-of-living increases of all Queenslanders. Those opposite can choose to ignore the facts, but just like their Premier’s contract with Queenslanders they are there in black and white. Their leader promised Redcliffe residents an \$80-a-year rebate on their water bills. Apparently for the LNP a promise of a saving per year does not actually mean each year. In their strange world it means for only one year.

On 4 February the Queensland Competition Authority released, without fanfare, its report on water bills in South-East Queensland. For Redcliffe residents this pricing path is an ugly one. This year those who call Redcliffe home, as if they had not suffered enough under the Premier’s captain picked and now disgraced MP, will face an increase on their water bills of 38.8 per cent. Let me repeat that for those opposite—38.8 per cent—the largest increase in water prices in South-East Queensland. What that will mean is an increase of \$481 on their water bills, taking the average bill for each Redcliffe household to over \$1,700 a year. According to the independent QCA the predominant reason for rising water bills in Redcliffe is the removal of the Newman government and council water rebates. Before those opposite try to pontificate and point the finger at others, they should be reminded that the structure for Unitywater was requested by the then Lord Mayor of Brisbane, Campbell Newman.

These sky-high water bills delivered by the Newman government come on top of the record-breaking increases to electricity bills, which for the average Redcliffe household will go up by 22.6 per cent, or \$268, per year on average. The figures from the QCA set out that if only the carbon tax and solar were contributing to price rises, the overall increase would be just three per cent, not 22.6 per cent.

**Mr McArdle** interjected.

**Mr PITT:** In just one year the Newman government has increased power prices by more than double the total cost of the carbon tax. The blame for these power price increases rests squarely at the feet of this Newman government.

**Mr McArdle** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Those on my right.

**Mr PITT:** Worse still, the fixed price of electricity is being hiked by 92 per cent this year and another 66 per cent next year or by more than \$200 over two years.

**Mr McArdle** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The minister will cease interjecting.

**Mr PITT:** This means that even if you turn off your lights and do the right thing, you will not escape the Newman government's power price slug. All this after the Premier, alongside Scott Driscoll, pledged in a contract with Queensland to lower their bills by \$120 per year, not to increase them by a record \$268 in just one year.

**Mr McArdle** interjected.

**Mr PITT:** On top of this the Newman government has increased taxes by more than \$1,000 per year for the average family of four, including hikes to the insurance levy and emergency services levy.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Minister for Energy and Water Supply will cease interjecting or I will warn him.

**Mr PITT:** The people of Redcliffe are right to be scratching their heads. Many are asking how they will make ends meet. They are right to be questioning how they were so misled by this government, by this Premier and by Scott Driscoll. No-one will forget the images of the Premier walking alongside Scott Driscoll personally endorsing him as the member for Redcliffe. No-one will forget the Premier and Scott Driscoll together promising to lower the cost of living for Redcliffe residents, before failing to deliver on that promise. No-one will forget the Premier standing in this place and defending Scott Driscoll, while at the same time Mr Driscoll was lining his own pockets and doing nothing to halt the rising cost of living that has hammered family budgets in Redcliffe.

**Mr McArdle** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The minister will cease interjecting.

**Mr McArdle** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! If the member will take his seat, I now warn the minister under standing order 253A for his interjections.

**Mr PITT:** On 22 February the people of Redcliffe have an opportunity to get a fresh direction, to make a fresh start with a member of parliament who will genuinely care about their wellbeing. In Yvette D'Ath the people of Redcliffe have the opportunity to elect someone who has a proven track record of delivering on what she promises, someone who will not take advantage of community groups and someone who will put her community's needs first ahead of her own political considerations. Yvette D'Ath is raising her family in Redcliffe. She and her husband, a police officer, understand how the Premier's broken promises on the cost of living are hurting local families and she will do everything she can to hold the Premier to account for those broken promises. I heard the Premier talking earlier about Yvette D'Ath being a failed union official. The only union official in recent times who has been a failed candidate is Bill Glasson.