




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR DALRYMPLE

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MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Wind Farms

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (3.24 pm): Deputy Premier Jeff Seeney has written seeking my opinion on the government's calling in of the wind farm's development application. From the language the Deputy Premier has used, it appears he wants this project to go ahead. The reality is that most residents in the Range View and Walkamin communities do not want this massive wind farm project, and many are questioning its viability and health risk compared to the Tully hydroelectric scheme that receives strong local support in the Ravenshoe-Mount Garnet region.

We have to point out that significant contributions to this wind farm development come from the federal government's grants for clean energy which will not stay with the local economy but will be taken offshore by a large Thai based company, and all turbines will be shipped from overseas while taxpayers and energy consumers will pay for this. I would like to point out a statement made by the Minister for Energy and Water, Mark McArdle, who said that the renewable energy target is increasing Queenslanders' electricity bills by \$81 per year. Mr McArdle said that renewable energy was important, but the challenge was making it cheap enough to compete with traditional forms of electricity. The energy minister has pointed out that he supports renewable energy. However, one must ensure the viability and cost of the energy schemes.

I have also taken heart from a speech Senator Ian Macdonald made in the Senate last February when he raised concerns about the health impacts of wind farms as well as being an eyesore. Senator Macdonald suggested hydroelectric schemes such as the Tully-Millstream were more viable alternatives. The former state government has already invested more than \$72 million in developing a Tully-Millstream hydroelectric scheme involving a series of dams and tunnels. The project was also designed to prevent flood mitigation which would help resolve flooding in Ingham and other low-lying areas. The reality is that the hydroelectric project would generate 600 megawatts while the wind farm would generate only 60 megawatts in real terms. The hydro scheme would create 700 jobs for seven years and will provide a massive boost to the Tablelands economy and produce everlasting clean energy for many decades to come while removing the need to transmit power at a higher cost from the south.

We must be prudent and question the viability of the \$550 million Mount Emerald wind farm operation which will increase electricity cost. As pointed out by Liberal senator Ian Macdonald, wind farms are a health risk and an eyesore. If we compare this to the \$700 million Tully-Millstream hydro scheme that has local support, will deliver massive job creation, provide unlimited cheap and clean power, will help expand the mining and agricultural industries and assist flood mitigation, this is a project worthy of government support.

I call on both the state and federal government, the energy minister, Mark McArdle, the Deputy Premier, Jeff Seeney, and Senator Ian Macdonald, who has already expressed great concern about

wind farm projects, to review the health effects from the wind farm and initiate a cost-benefit analysis to identify the viability and benefits of the Tully-Millstream over the Emerald wind farm.

(Time expired)