



Speech By  
**Andrew Powell**


**MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE**

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**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Electricity Prices**

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (10.14 am): Another day, another revelation about Labor's diabolical plans for this state's electricity companies—diabolical plans that will lead to higher power prices for Queensland households and businesses. Another day, another criticism, so let us just recap on where we are to date. First there was the ACCC. Rod Sims, Chairman of the ACCC, noted that Queensland already had the most concentrated energy market in mainland Australia and foreshadowed that a further reduction in competition could result in higher electricity prices in Queensland. Then there was the QCA. Consultants for the Queensland Competition Authority echoed a similar warning earlier this year, saying if the two generation portfolios were to be merged in a way that increased market concentration then wholesale prices would likely increase. And today we have the Queensland Productivity Commission saying that merging state owned generators CS Energy and Stanwell, which Labor promised at the last election, risked making it worse by reducing competition. The warning is contained in a 93-page issues paper released yesterday as part of QPC's inquiry into power prices.

On the back of loading up our electricity companies with debt; on the back of ripping nearly \$3½ billion worth of dividends out of our electricity companies; on the back of delaying deregulation in the electricity market in South-East Queensland—a move that could have seen some \$600 to \$900 a year taken off the average bill; on the back of another new renewable energy scheme that will cost Queenslanders while we are still paying off their last debacle to the tune of \$3½ billion; on the back of legally challenging the Australian Energy Regulator, demanding more money for Ergon, for Energex and for Powerlink so that Queenslanders end up paying more we now hear that the Minister for Energy is rigorously forging ahead on merging our electricity generators. Is there no part of the electricity sector that Labor cannot botch up? Colleagues and Queenslanders, there are two things that you can be sure of: firstly, Labor does not know what it is doing when it comes to electricity in this state and, secondly, Queenslanders will pay as a result through higher power prices. Today's editorial in the *Courier-Mail* summed it up perfectly—

In the Government's priorities, it seems the long-suffering electricity consumer comes a distant second to filling the state's coffers.