




Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR YEERONGPILLY

Record of Proceedings, 14 October 2015

MOTION

Electricity Industry

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (6.05 pm): I move—

That all words after 'House' be deleted and the following words inserted: 'expects the final determination of the Australian Energy Regulator on 30 October 2015 will lead to more stable network prices for electricity consumers in Queensland'.

What an extraordinary contribution from the member for Glass House. After 43 per cent increases over the last three years under the Newman government—at a time when it was building its tower of power; spending money on itself but not doing anything about energy prices in Queensland—he comes in here with this motion condemning us in terms of our dividends from the energy companies. But what did the member say on radio last week? He was asked by Steve Austin what he thought about the policy of using dividends to pay down debt. This is the quote from the member for Glass House—

It is an election promise, yes. They said they would use dividends from these electricity companies to pay down debt.

Thank you for your support, member for Glass House. You have explained to the chamber that what we are doing is exactly what we said we would do at the last election. We said we would keep our assets in public hands and that is exactly what we are doing. In fact, if the member for Glass House was one of Snow White's accomplices he would be Drowsy because we announced this three months ago on 14 July in the budget. It has taken the member three months to discover the fact that we have regeared the energy companies to ensure that general government debt actually falls. It has taken the member three months to pick up on it. That is really quick. No wonder the member is on that side of the chamber.

At the heart of this motion is the opposition trying to say that dividends are driving prices and that is absolutely incorrect. What we are seeing this year is a drop in electricity prices for the first time in years of half a per cent on average across this state. Those opposite would have killed for numbers like that in the last three years. For three years they did nothing about it. That is why they are on that side of the chamber, not this side. The people of Queensland saw through the LNP policies and backed our public assets staying in public hands.

That is what they said and, having done that, they have greater confidence in prices being kept down. The regulator will make a decision and the regulator has made it very clear that it is committed to better outcomes for consumers. The regulator has said that to me directly. There will be submissions from energy companies, councils and community groups. That is a normal part of the process. We will see much better outcomes for energy consumers than during the past three years under the government of members opposite.

We are seeing a very sneaky game from the opposition. No longer can they say that they are against selling public assets. They dumped Strong Choices after the most catastrophic loss in Australian election history, so they cannot say that directly. However, what they are now doing is trying to

undermine public assets in every way they possibly can. I draw the attention of the House to recent comments the Leader of the Opposition made on ABC 612. It seems that ABC 612 is the happy hunting ground for LNP slip-ups. I will table a media release that quotes the opposition leader, the member for Southern Downs. He was asked about public assets sales in New South Wales. He said—

If I can just make a comment on NSW and the situation down there. I think it will become more and more stark as we go on from here over the next 12, 18 months, two to three years, and possibly beyond about the benefit of this—

he is referring to asset sales—

for NSW in contrast to what this Government has proposed. That may force people to come to a different conclusion in the future ...

I table that document.

Tabled paper: Media release, dated 29 September 2015, by the Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy and Water Supply, Hon. Mark Bailey, titled 'Opposition Leader Lawrence Springborg leaves door open for LNP asset sales plan' [[1390](#)].

The Leader of the Opposition was publicly canvassing the sale of our public assets once again. They dumped it six months ago and they are backflipping now. They know that their government and their policies left Queenslanders behind. That is why they are sitting on that side of the House. That is why they have a 19 per cent swing against them. That is why Queenslanders will continue to back this government and better power prices for Queenslanders.