




Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Bailey**

**MEMBER FOR YEERONGPILLY**

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### **CRIME AND CORRUPTION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (6.27 pm): It is a bit rich to get a lecture from the opposition after it lost 1,300 renewable energy jobs in three years. At a time when the world was moving to clean energy, the LNP lost 1,300 renewable energy jobs in three years. That is quite a remarkable achievement. When they say they represent the Master Electricians yet only recently they called solar users 'latte sippers' and 'champagne drinkers', I sense a contradiction.

What we are really seeing here is a proxy debate for the opposition's support for the privatisation of our energy companies. That is what this debate is about. Logically, if this company was privatised, which is what the LNP would do, wouldn't they be competing against the Master Electricians throughout the state? Of course they would be! That is exactly the case. To their shame, the LNP persists in its opposition to keeping our power assets in public hands. Sixty-five per cent of regional Queenslanders support keeping our power assets in public hands.

The member for Gregory ought to consider the privatisers in his party room. Currently his constituents are subsidised to the tune of \$600 million a year through the uniform tariff policy, because those assets are being kept in public hands. If the member for Gregory wants a good service in regional Queensland, the best thing that he can do is support our assets being kept in public hands.

Let us look at the energy services business logically. On what is the hysteria and the extremism that the opposition is putting forward today based? At this point, there is no firm proposal with any detail. It is simply a matter being considered, as would any large energy company that is looking at this issue right now. Renewables are coming. Batteries are coming. Storage is coming.

If we put the LNP position logically, what they are saying is that the merged entities should ignore renewables, ignore batteries, ignore storage—they should cede the revolution that is coming. What they are saying is that the energy company merger should ignore an extraordinary amount of work that is about to happen.

Instead of giving us an ideological campaign against public assets, what they should be telling the Master Electricians is the truth—that is, there is going to be a lot of work as batteries get more economical every year, there are going to be a lot of solar PVs going in, there are going to be a lot of storage units going in, there are going to be a lot of energy management systems going in, there are going to be a lot of battery arrays going in. There is a lot of work coming.

We will run these companies well. We will work in that space. We are already testing batteries from five different manufacturers in Cairns. We are already partnering with Sunverge Energy, Arena and Ergon in terms of solar PV and battery arrangements. We are at the cutting edge of what is going on. We will run these public assets well. We will make sure that we are in this space.

**Mr Cripps** interjected.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock! Member for Hinchinbrook and your debating colleagues from the government back bench, I would urge you to have your discussions outside before the vote is taken. If you persist you may not be here when the vote is taken.

**Mr BAILEY:** The member for Glass House was suggesting somehow that the government would be propping up these businesses. He obviously does not understand, despite being around the cabinet table previously, that Ergon and Energex are run under commercial charters.

**Mr Boothman** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock! Sorry to interrupt your thought process, Minister. Member for Albert, you have had a pretty good go all day, and especially during this debate. You are now warned under standing order 253A. Persist and you will not be here for the vote either.

**Mr BAILEY:** If you listen to the opposition, it is like the Joh days—‘Goodness gracious me, this socialism from the Labor Party!’ Let us look at some of the socialist paradises that have publicly owned utilities—countries like Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea, Sweden, Taiwan, the UK and the US. They are all extraordinary socialist utopias according to the opposition.

We will keep our assets in public hands. We will get the basics right. I say to the member for Glass House, these are the basics: keep our public assets in public hands, keep residential prices stable or falling and not have 43 per cent increases and direct them when necessary as we have done—in New South Wales and ACT prices will rise because they are not in public hands—and grow the renewable market. That is what we stand for. That is what the LNP is still opposing.