



Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Bailey**


**MEMBER FOR YEERONGPILLY**

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Record of Proceedings, 11 May 2016

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Electricity Prices**

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (2.49 pm): I was going to take some notes on my predecessor, but there was nothing to write down—not a word. For the second year in a row in Queensland, under the Palaszczuk government we have seen the price of electricity stabilise with only a 0.6 per cent increase, which is less than half the inflation rate. After a 43 per cent increase—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, one moment. Leader of the Opposition, I give you notice: if you persist, you will be warned under standing order 253. I do not think that is a good look.

**Mr BAILEY:** We have seen an increase of less than half the inflation rate—

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, one moment. Member for Kawana, you are now warned under standing order 253A.

**Mr BAILEY:** At the moment under the draft Ergon price we see an increase of 0.6 per cent, which is less than half the inflation rate. The opposition would have killed for those numbers following double-digit price increases year in, year out under the LNP. That was a massive failure. Why are prices so low? Because this government directed Ergon and Energex to accept the regulator's decision. We are not in the same position as New South Wales, where privatised electricity assets have meant price increases following the success of the energy company appeals. For two years in a row, electricity prices have been stabilised under this government.

I wish to talk about the issues paper released by the independent Renewable Energy Taskforce, which was another election commitment kept by the Palaszczuk government. The panel is made up of five eminent people, and I say 'eminent' deliberately as its members include some very heavy hitters from the private sector, Amanda McKenzie from the Climate Council and Paul Meredith from UQ. They canvassed a whole range of policy options for achieving the 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2030. The independent panel has looked at nine options. However, all we get is nitpicking and politicking from opposition members trying to portray this as being some new government tax, which it is not. We have made it very clear that we have ruled out a fossil fuel levy, because we made a commitment to Queenslanders that there would be no new taxes, charges or fees. We will keep our election promises, unlike the member for Clayfield, who brought in 43 per cent increases having promised to reduce electricity prices by \$120. How did he go with that? We saw a 43 per cent increase with \$440 surges under the administration of the member for Clayfield. Of course, under a Nicholls-led government we would see asset sales, because that is what he believed in only seven months ago.

This report highlights the inherent contradictions when government is the owner of a business. My very firm view is that governments should be regulators. We should have the power, without the conflict, to regulate these companies. Once Strong Choices, always Strong Choices.