



Speech By  
**Patrick Weir**


**MEMBER FOR CONDAMINE**

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Record of Proceedings, 10 November 2016

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Condamine Solar Projects, Jobs**

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (2.54 pm): I would like to acknowledge my friend Bob Harper in the gallery. Great to see you, Bob! I rise to speak on a matter of public interest regarding the proposed construction of three solar farms in the seat of Condamine. My remarks today come in response to comments made by the Premier in this House during the last sitting week directed at me. The Premier, while extolling the virtues and benefits of solar projects across Queensland, stated that she would like to hear what the member for Condamine had to say about the jobs bonanza that is coming our way. Both the Premier and Minister Bailey have been quoted as saying there will be thousands of jobs created across Queensland as a result of the 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2030. This information may be accurate in the construction phase, but I have not heard the Premier or the minister quote the number of full-time positions that will remain after the construction phase is completed.

In the seat of Condamine there are two solar farm projects which have gained approval and one currently going through the approval process. Dalby is the site of Origin Energy's solar farm. This project will employ 90 workers during the construction stage and then that number will dramatically reduce to four full-time positions. The Oakey Canadian solar farm will be built in stages over the next 35 years. During this lengthy period of construction 120 construction workers will be employed as needed while building the farm. Full-time operational staff will then number three. The final solar farm proposed in Condamine is to be located at Yarranlea near Pittsworth managed by a company trading as Yarranlea Solar. During the construction phase it will employ 120 construction workers. Full-time operational staff once again will number only three.

As members can see, these projects, upon completion, will provide a total of 10 full-time positions in the seat of Condamine. I would suggest this is not exactly the picture being painted by the government to Queensland or investors. While I hope that our local construction firms win the tenders for these projects and employ local labour, this is at best a short-term employment boost. The residents of Condamine have witnessed this boom and bust cycle before with the CSG construction phase. There was the promise of thousands of jobs. However, once construction ceased the jobs disappeared and the local community and business sector were left to pick up the pieces. We have seen this government in action chasing its ideological dreams. We saw it in this House last night when the workforce of Oakey was cast to the wind. The Premier and minister need to be honest when providing employment figures to ensure communities are in receipt of the correct information to prepare for the future.