




Speech By  
**Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe**

**MEMBER FOR SANDGATE**

---

Record of Proceedings, 20 April 2016

**CRIME AND CORRUPTION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games) (6.17 pm): The Palaszczuk Labor government is committed to consultation and that is why we are happy to support the amended motion before the House. This government supports small business. Mum-and-dad electricians are no exception. We greatly respect the work of master electricians. They have been at the front line of rolling out hundreds of thousands of solar installations over the last several years right across all parts of Queensland as a direct result of Labor's proactive incentives for solar uptake and to grow a new industry for Queensland. As a consequence, this market is very competitive and well serviced by existing contractors.

That is why it is very important that we all should, as a state and in particular as members of this House, reject the LNP's scare campaign. The proposed energy services business will not be in competition with these established businesses. This side of the House understands solar energy. It is important to make sure that it is part of the state's energy future. I wish I could say the same about the member for Clayfield. He thinks he is up for the battler here. He is claiming he is defending the small businesses installing solar across Queensland, but two years or so ago it was a different story. In this House, on this side of the chamber at the time, he derided users as latte sippers and the chardonnay set. It was disgraceful. It was something that I found very, very useful, may I tell members, when I was visiting people across the electorate of Sandgate, people who had solar installations on their roof.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** In Logan, in Algester, in Yeerongpilly, in Brisbane Central as well, that was a line that hurt and damaged that government and it showed how out of touch the member for Clayfield was. According to the member for Clayfield, residential solar installations are nothing but a plaything of the elite and had nothing to do with battlers. How wrong he was! Statistics from the national REC Agents Association show that 53 per cent of solar installations occur in regional and rural communities. The highest concentrations of residential solar were not found in our leafy suburbs. The member for Clayfield does not get solar, yet here he is saying that the sky is falling in.

There is another factor at play here and we know what it is: the member for Clayfield is also 'Mr Strong Choices'. That was the greatest of lost loves. That was the one that got away from the member for Clayfield. It was the great power sale that never was. It never was because the people of Queensland stopped it and they stopped it by electing a consultative Labor government. This side of the House knows that Queenslanders want our important public assets to remain in public hands. That is why we are proud to defend Ergon and Energex as strong publicly owned electricity businesses. By merging those businesses, we will ensure that they provide benefits for Queenslanders for many years to come.

It is interesting to note that opposition to the privatisation of public energy assets was stronger in regional Queensland. That is because those people know how important it is to have strong public utilities providing the services that regional Queenslanders rely on more than any other and that provide

jobs for their communities. Workers in the electrical industries to whom the member for Gregory referred are very important to all of their communities. We stand by them and support them; however, so too are the Ergon power workers in those communities. Those people make a huge difference in response to natural disasters and it is very important that we support them.

That is why this government is also proud to see the establishment of the headquarters of the new energy services business in Townsville. The government is committed to jobs in the regions. The benefits of the energy services business will be not just for Townsville but also for all Queensland. Over the next decade we anticipate creating up to 500 positions in regional Queensland as we see the broader energy industry grow with innovation at its fore and engaged with a great sector of mum-and-dad electrical contractors who can take advantage of those opportunities.

*(Time expired)*