




Speech By
Hon. Curtis Pitt

MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Electricity Prices

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (10.20 am): If we ever needed an example of why those opposite were thrown out of office, it is the 'peacock' from Kawana. When it comes to putting downward pressure on electricity prices, I am proud to report that, after the shocking 43 per cent increases under the previous government, the Palaszczuk government has taken decisive action. Our Powering Queensland Plan—a \$1.1 billion plan—is helping to stabilise electricity prices, deliver jobs in infrastructure and lead the transition to a clean energy sector. This is a move that has been applauded by the ACCC.

Although I welcome the federal government commissioning the ACCC's national inquiry into electricity prices, this action should have been taken a long time ago. The National Electricity Market—the NEM—is broken owing to policy paralysis at the federal level. That has prevented much needed investment in new generation, it has driven up wholesale prices and it has put energy security at risk. It is not delivering for households, businesses, industry or the government.

Despite that, our government is doing the heavy lifting, using the levers that we have available, because we kept our energy assets in public hands. In fact, while the failed former treasurer, the member for Clayfield, wasted \$100 million of taxpayers' money preparing to sell assets, Labor invested our revenues in keeping electricity prices lower for Queenslanders.

Under the Powering Queensland Plan, we have invested a massive \$770 million to slash the expected QCA electricity price increase by more than half. This is expected to save a typical household \$56 a year. To further shield Queenslanders from the high electricity price rises that are being felt across the rest of the country, our government has directed Energy Queensland to remove the costs of the Solar Bonus Scheme from network charges until at least 2020. The only way this has been possible is through the retention of the ownership of these assets in public hands.

The result of our intervention is that Queensland has the lowest retail price increase of all the mainland states—3.3 per cent compared to around 10 per cent to 20 per cent across the other states. Over the term of our government the average price increase has been 1.9 per cent, compared to 43 per cent over the term of the LNP government.

The Chairman of the ACCC, Rod Sims, has welcomed our decisive action, stating—

... the good news is, the Queensland Government, alone of any government, has drawn on its own budget to remove that cost to consumers and I certainly applaud them for doing that and again I think it's evidence of a welcome focus on affordability.

We have also been working hard to reduce wholesale electricity prices. During the estimates hearing, I was very clear and tabled—and I will show this to the House and table it—the wholesale electricity price increases for 2011 to 2014.

Tabled paper: Graph titled Wholesale electricity price increases 2011-12 to 2014-15 [[1222](#)].

Tabled paper: Graph titled Wholesale electricity price increases 2014-15 to 2016-17 [[1223](#)].

Under the former government, we can see where Queensland was positioned.

How are we going? Under a Labor government, we have the lowest rises in wholesale electricity prices. It is there in black and white. It is irrefutable. It is because of the work that we have done in government in having to fix the mess left by those opposite.