




Speech By  
**Hon. Curtis Pitt**

**MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE**

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Record of Proceedings, 12 October 2017

**MOTION: ELECTRICITY SUPPLY**

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (6.06 pm): It is clear that the member for Burleigh had not even read the paper he was trying to read from before he got up to speak because he did not know what he was talking about. It is a real shame because people do deserve better from people who purport to be the alternative government in this state. Clearly, they are a long way from that.

I have a couple of quick points in response to the member for Burleigh. He keeps going on with this nonsense that the dividend policy and the way we have run our balance sheet reform have in some way affected electricity prices. He clearly does not understand how this system works. It is very, very obvious that he does not understand. He should know that the electricity regime in Australia is very heavily regulated. We are part of a National Electricity Market. Prices are set by the market, determining how we operate in that national market. When it comes to our retail pricing, he needs to be very aware—and hopefully he is—of the role the QCA plays in terms of price setting and base price. It is a nonsense.

What Queenslanders are suffering under right now is the legacy of the 43 per cent increase in prices under those opposite. He can talk all he likes about how high prices are, but they would be 43 per cent lower if they did not go up by 43 per cent under the last government. That is a very, very simple thing. That is exactly where they are at. They are clutching at straws because they know they failed with their energy policy and electricity pricing when they were in office.

This week we have seen from them a failure to meet even the most basic standards of sticking to the facts and doing something real in question time. They have displayed the lowest possible standards. They have not even gone near the facts, and that is absolutely evident in the contribution from the member for Burleigh. As I have said this week, it is very clearly the case that the very, very lazy Leader of the Opposition, who loves his trickle-down economics, is trickling down his laziness to the shadow minister for energy. We know that what he said tonight is based on reading a pamphlet that he could not even read. Clearly, his arguments do not stack up. We have absolutely no plans to force Queenslanders to turn their air conditioners to 26 degrees, as was wrongly claimed by those opposite.

This misleading motion is nothing more than scaremongering by those opposite, who are trying to score cheap political points. The suggestion to set air conditioners to 26 degrees is relevant only—I stress only—in emergency situations when we may confront a potential power shortage. This protocol has been in place for a number of years and guess what? It was in place under previous governments. Why will the LNP members not say that to Queenslanders? Maybe they are ignorant or maybe they are too silly to know what the actual situation was. They clearly forgot that some of these elements were contained in their own policy when they were in government. Embarrassingly, we have seen the federal government come out with essentially the same policy that we have, backing in our position. It is absolutely ridiculous. Not once, but twice this week we have been subjected to a barrage from those opposite about a policy they either do not understand or are choosing not to understand, which is even worse because it just means the deceit continues when it comes to Queenslanders.

Those opposite do have a real gall when it comes to attacking this government on energy and electricity pricing. Given that they wanted to sell all of our energy businesses, clearly there would have been no government intervention if they had been sold and we would be in the same predicament as those southern states where they are privately owned. We know what happens when privatisation occurs when it comes to electricity pricing: prices skyrocket. If it were not for the interventions that we put in place—and going to the member's earlier point when he talked about how much revenue is being generated by the generators, over \$400 million, he does not do his sums very well. What we have said is that we are going to reinvest the businesses' revenue—and we still own them—back into supporting lower electricity prices. We will be putting back in \$771 million. Anything that we have recouped out of the businesses we will put back in to lower prices for Queenslanders.

Those opposite cannot get to the fact that they failed miserably on electricity pricing. The member talks about blackouts. The only blackout we have seen in this state over the last few years was a renewables blackout under those opposite. Under them there was nothing—zero, no projects. We have 21 major projects valued at more than \$3.4 billion supporting more than 2,700 jobs, and they always forget the jobs. Besides the great environmental and energy benefits, it is the jobs they forget. These are the jobs that we are here to bank on.

We on this side of the House can hold our head high. We cannot even acknowledge what is in this motion. It is based on a farce, just like their entire policy.