




Speech By
Glenn Butcher

MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE

Record of Proceedings, 25 October 2017

MOTION: ENERGY SUPPLY

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (6.18 pm): I rise to speak tonight against the LNP's misconceived motion. I would like to clear up a couple of things the member just said: (1) is he a bit of a hypocrite because they shut down the Collinsville power station in his own electorate; and (2) solar panels produce power while it is cloudy.

'Queensland has a diverse mix of coal and gas-fired generation complemented by renewables, including hydro. We are the powerhouse of the nation. Our diversity of generation means that we can manage the transition to a higher integration of renewable generation without compromising security of supply in Queensland.' That was the finding of the Renewable Energy Expert Panel—an independent team of business, energy and environment experts chaired by Colin Mugglestone, investment banker and former head of energy and utilities at Macquarie Group.

It is also consistent with recent findings of the Australian Energy Market Operator that in Queensland there is no material unserved energy risk expected across the 10-year assessment period and that the reliability standard is projected to be met in Queensland under all scenarios. To be clear for those opposite, the Australian Energy Market Operator factored in increasing renewable energy generation and the 50 per cent renewable energy target in this assessment. This is just more fearmongering by an opposition ideologically opposed to renewables and unwilling to face facts on power.

The reality is that energy is undergoing transformational change in the way it is generated, transported and used in Queensland. Unlike the LNP, who prefer to stick their heads in the sand on this issue, the Palaszczuk government is planning for this change into the future.

It was under the Newman-Nicholls government that the last coal-fired power station was shut in Queensland. In fact, it was in Collinsville. It was under the LNP that two units at Tarong Power Station in the South Burnett were put in cold storage. It was under the LNP that 385 megawatts of secure dispatchable supply from Swanbank E was put offline at the height of their asset sales frenzy.

It is the Palaszczuk government that is powering Queensland. Our Powering Queensland Plan shows just how serious this government is about ensuring Queenslanders have access to secure, reliable and affordable energy. This plan also shows how serious we are about continuing to manage security of supply and wholesale price volatility at the same time as diversifying our generating assets.

We have had the lowest average wholesale prices in the NEM for the last six months. We also have the lowest household price increase of any mainland state this year—2.3 per cent compared to 20 per cent in southern privatised states. We are bringing Swanbank E back online—increasing supply, reducing volatility and supporting local jobs. Under this government there is also a renewable power station boom occurring, including \$2 billion worth of investment committed, with more to come, and 1,300 direct jobs coming in the next 12 months, including over 800 in the previous speaker's electorate.

We have 22 large-scale renewable energy projects committed and under construction, totalling over 1,900 megawatts in Queensland. No other state has more renewable projects under development than we see right here in Queensland. When operational, these projects will increase the percentage of energy generated by renewables in Queensland to almost 17 per cent, powering around 880,000 Queensland homes. These power plants will also place downward pressure on electricity prices once they are operational. They are delivering important benefits to the state economy, particularly in regional centres, and thousands of jobs. The Palaszczuk government recognises the importance of the role of our traditional energy sectors in both our regional and national economies.

The LNP's policy for a new coal-fired power station makes no sense economically or environmentally. The last time industry decided to build a new coal-fired power station in the NEM was more than a decade ago, and industry just does not back it. It is only the Palaszczuk government that has a comprehensive plan to power Queensland, delivering affordable energy, security of supply and jobs in our regions.

(Time expired)