




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR YEERONGPILLY

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**PUBLIC WORKS AND UTILITIES COMMITTEE: REPORT, MOTION TO TAKE
NOTE**

 **Mr BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (12.00 pm): I was not going to contribute to this debate, but the hypocrisy of the opposition needs a response. The misleading approach in this debate and generally is shameful. We saw a government with the biggest majority in Australian—not just Queensland—political history lose power after one term. One of the key reasons they lost power was that power prices went up 43 per cent in only three years. That is a fact. We have never had an apology from those opposite in the LNP for ripping off Queenslanders to that extent. Their excuse is ‘the dog ate my homework’, ‘it was someone else’s fault’. They owned the assets. They could have made decisions. They could have intervened on behalf of Queensland consumers for three years but they did not. Why didn’t they? It was because they thought they had the biggest majority in history and they could safely rip-off Queenslanders and get away with it. They did not get away with it. They are in opposition because they ripped off Queenslanders, and they are trying to do it again.

Let us get to some basic facts about electricity. We saw a 43 per cent price increase under Tim Nicholls as treasurer and Campbell Newman as premier of this state. We have seen average price increases accumulative of only about five per cent at the retail level over the three years of the Labor government—43 per cent under LNP, five per cent under Labor. That is a fact. We have had the lowest wholesale prices in the country since March this year and we are projected to have the lowest prices for the next three years. Let me say that again: Queensland has the lowest wholesale prices in the nation and will have for the next three years because we are managing power assets and we are keeping them in public hands. That is a fact.

This year we moved to slash by more than half the projected increase of 7.1 per cent by the Queensland Competition Authority, delivering the lowest increase in electricity prices of any mainland state by a long way. It was 19 per cent this year in South Australia and in the ACT, 11 per cent across the border in New South Wales and nearly 10 per cent in Victoria and yet we are looking at a three per cent increase in the retail price in Queensland. Let us get the facts on the record.

Let me also point out the weakness of the members of the LNP. They will not stand up to their mates in Canberra. They are lily-livered, they are weak-kneed and they will not stand up to Malcolm Turnbull and Josh Frydenberg and say, ‘Implement the Finkel review.’ We have a broken national electricity market within which Queensland is performing the best of any state in terms of getting price outcomes compared to 19 per cent, 11 per cent and nearly 10 per cent. We need national reform. We need real leadership from the Turnbull government for a clean energy target. Do Tim Nicholls and other members of the LNP stand up to their mates in Canberra and say, ‘Get your act together. Stop being paralysed on policy. Stop being divided. Stop being dysfunctional and get on with it after four years in power.’? Do they say that? No! They come in here with their distortions and selective statistics and think they are going to get through this election that is coming in the next six months with that sort of pathetic lack of policy development.

They are not going to get away with it. They will pay dearly for it. Promising a ninth coal-fired power station in this state when we have eight massive baseload generators when nobody in the marketplace, none of the energy providers, support it is an absolute nonsense. In terms of the Australian Energy Council and a whole range of businesses there is no support out there. The market is not delivering it. It is now more expensive to go with coal-fired power stations. It is old technology. We have an opposition that does not understand the energy market. They are promising a pathetic policy that even the Treasurer of the Turnbull government has demolished by saying that cheap coal is a myth and it takes seven years to deliver. Those opposite do not have a policy. They put up prices 43 per cent before and they will do it again. That is what they are lining up to do by having a ridiculous policy and it needs to be pointed out.