




Speech By
Michael Hart

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

Record of Proceedings, 14 February 2017

MOTION: NORTH QUEENSLAND, ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (5.59 pm): I move—

That this House calls on the Palaszczuk government to support the development of a coal-fired generator to provide reliable and affordable baseload power in North Queensland.

In moving this motion tonight the LNP's focus is purely on providing reliable and affordable power for the people of Queensland. Labor's headlong rush into renewable energy threatens the supply of electricity to each and every one of us and we have seen this in other states and in particular South Australia, which has jeopardised the reliability and affordability of electricity in that state. Today is Valentine's Day and we should all be spending that with our partners having a candlelit dinner, but what we do not want to see is people in Queensland having candlelit dinners every night because of the risk that this Labor government is putting on the people of Queensland. They say, 'Build it and they will come.' Surely even those green zealots across the chamber see that electricity prices in Australia are too high and that is making us as a nation uncompetitive. Why is that? Because we are part of the national energy market and Labor's ridiculous policy positions in other states such as the extreme renewable energy targets in South Australia and Victoria's gas policies have pushed up the wholesale price of electricity. At one stage on Saturday Queensland was selling electricity into New South Wales at \$14,000 a megawatt. That is not a bad thing as long as we can spare the electricity. If the other states want to make those mistakes then we need to be in a position to take advantage of those mistakes, but we have to have that reserve that we can onsell to the other states when they need it and hence our push tonight for a new generation low-emission power station in North Queensland.

In recent days South Australia has started to speculate about nationalising its generators. Why would it need to do that? Because it has lost control of its power system with the recent blackouts and the highest wholesale power in the country, with businesses threatening to walk away from the state. If businesses want to walk away from South Australia because they cannot secure reliable, affordable power, then let Queensland give them a home. Let us attract them to Queensland. Let us build another base load high-energy-efficient, low-emission coal-fired power station in North Queensland. We have the black coal. We should not be scared of coal. The rest of the world is not scared of coal. I asked the Parliamentary Library to do a report for me, and China has 639 coal plants in preconstruction and 389 coal plants under construction. India has 238 in preconstruction and 132 in construction. Even Germany—which this government puts up as its green energy mentor—has two coal-fired power stations under preproduction and another one under construction already. Setting a 50 per cent renewable energy target in Queensland is about as useful as a solar powered flashlight. If you take the battery out of a solar powered flashlight it does not work at night, does it? That is just like the state electricity supply: without that base load power as a storage solution, renewable energy can never get to 50 per cent.

I want to table another document that I received from the library that shows how many countries in the world have 50 per cent renewable power.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, detailing coal and electricity generation statistics [[167](#)].

Do members know how many that is? One! One country in the world has more than 50 per cent renewable power, and that is Iceland. It has it because it has an abundance of hydropower and geothermal power. That is why it has it, but we do not so we need to get on with this. Why would we follow South Australia over the cliff, which is basically what it has done with its 50 per cent renewable power? We would follow it over the cliff into the darkness. We do not want to be sitting there having a candlelit dinner unless we really have to, and tonight is the night to have it. We should all be home with our partners having that candlelit dinner, but we do not want to be doing that on a regular basis so we should build a base load coal-fired power station—an efficient base load coal-fired power station—in North Queensland. We need to get on with the planning. It will take a few years, but let us get it done.