




Speech By
Michael Hart

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

Record of Proceedings, 8 August 2017

MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Electricity Prices

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (12.31 pm): I join with the member for Mirani in passing on my condolences and the best wishes to the family and friends of the young man who lost his life over the weekend in a coalmine in North Queensland. I also offer my best wishes to those US servicemen who were involved in the tragic incident off Rockhampton over the weekend. Our thoughts and best wishes are with the family and friends of the servicemen and the servicemen themselves who were involved in that tragic incident and the rescue mission that followed.

I also join with the member for Mirani in saying that it is certainly the case that the issue of electricity costs in this state is very complex. There are a lot of people who try to muddy the waters around this particular issue. They are all from the other side of this parliament. The member for Mirani was passed a number of notes about electricity costs from the former minister for energy, who is now sitting a couple of seats from him.

The Labor Party keep parroting phrases about a 43 per cent increase in electricity prices that occurred during our period of government from 2012 to 2015. Let us understand how this all works. It certainly is a complex issue. Some 50 per cent of electricity costs are made up of network costs. They are set by the Australian Energy Regulator every five years. They were set in 2010 for the period to 2015.

Mr Mander: Who was in power then?

Mr HART: They were set under the former Labor government—the Blich and Beattie governments.

Mr BAILEY: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I believe the member for Burleigh is misleading the House. He is misrepresenting this issue. There is a maximum made—it is not set—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Yeerongpilly, feel free to write to the Speaker about this.

Mr HART: They do not like hearing the truth, do they? The Leader of the Opposition pointed out the situation in relation to the new trains. I am now pointing out the situation in relation to the price of electricity. In 2010 the Australian Energy Regulator set the price for a period of five years—

Mr BAILEY: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I believe the member for Burleigh is misleading the House. It was not set. A maximum revenue level was determined. It was not set.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Yeerongpilly, as I said before, you can write to the Speaker about this. You are on the speaking list so you can have your say then.

Mr HART: They just do not like hearing the truth. The truth is that the Australian Energy Regulator locked in those prices—

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members on my right!

Mr HART: As the member for Yeerongpilly said, it was returning the revenue. After the government of the time spent so much money gold plating the networks the Australian Energy Regulator said that they could recover 15 per cent. That was locked in from 2010 to 2015.

When we came to government in 2012 we took immediate action. The member for Caloundra, when he was the minister for energy, took immediate action. We got rid of that gold plating. The next decision of the Australian Energy Regulator led to network costs stabilising for the next five years—2015 to 2020. What a coincidence that at the time the Labor Party came to office they were able to say that electricity prices stabilised. That was as a result of what we did when we were government not what they did when they were in government. Since then—

Mr BAILEY: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. The member for Burleigh is misleading the House. He just referred to a 2015 AER determination which was in our term of government not in his.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. Member for Yeerongpilly, as I have stated twice, you can write to the Speaker with your grievances.

Mr KRAUSE: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. The member for Yeerongpilly has made frivolous and repetitive points of order that you have ruled out of order. I ask that you warn the member for Yeerongpilly.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. I will be the judge of what is in and out of order.

Mr HART: If the member for Yeerongpilly thinks that I am wrong he will have the opportunity to tell us exactly what he thinks is right. At the end of the day, network costs were under control. This government has now lost control of the generating stock.

In 2015-16 this government actually earned \$382 million from generating electricity in this state. They then budgeted for \$482 million in 2016-17. They actually earned \$892 million from those generators. They had been gouging the people of Queensland. For the last 12 months they have made an extra \$410 million in income from the generators that are owned by this state and controlled by this state government. They have made an extra \$410 million at the expense of the people of Queensland. This has pushed up wholesale electricity prices by 70 per cent.

The ACCC are looking into this. I was in Townsville last night for the ACCC meeting. The Labor Party was not represented at that meeting.

(Time expired)