



Speech By  
**Michael Hart**


**MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH**

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Record of Proceedings, 12 October 2017

**MOTION**

**Electricity Supply**

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (6.01 pm): I move—

That this House condemns the Palaszczuk government for its Summer Preparedness Plan asking Queenslanders to put their air conditioners to 26 degrees or above to avoid blackouts.

This plan that the Labor Party has put out in the last few days asks families, businesses and industries, which are currently paying record electricity prices, to use less electricity, to put their air conditioners to 26 degrees or above, to turn their lights out and to turn off their applications and equipment. The reaction to this has been swift, with widespread condemnation from the people of Queensland. Let us look at the back page of this plan. It says—

If the demand for electricity is greater than the available supply, there is no choice but to reduce demand or else the entire system can fail.

I repeat: the entire system could fail. This is how poorly the Labor government have constructed their plans for electricity. They have absolutely no plan for this state going forward, except for higher electricity prices, and I will talk more about that shortly. Queenslanders are not wasting electricity; they cannot afford to because it costs too much money to waste. They are being as efficient as they possibly can be. The plan says—

During a heatwave, residents may be asked to manage electricity network stress by—  
sorry, it is a bit late at night to read this small print—

... changing air conditioners to 26 degrees or above and using cooling only in occupied rooms during peak hours. This helps us manage demand and mitigate the risk of load-shedding occurring.

Load shedding is the last thing we need over summer this year. The plan continues—

Workplaces may be asked to use air conditioning at 26 degrees only in occupied spaces, avoid using advertising lights and other non-essential lighting, and turn off non-essential electrical equipment.

That is their plan. That is the only thing they have got. How have they gone with their other plans around electricity? They have ripped 100 per cent dividends out of our generators. How did that go for them? That pushed up the price of electricity, and there is no doubt about that. They left our GOCs with no money to spend on their businesses. They loaded \$5 billion of debt on to our government energy businesses. That must have put upward pressure on our GOCs to increase the price of electricity. There is no doubt about that at all.

The government have been caught out using Stanwell and CS Energy to gouge the prices of electricity for the consumers in Queensland. The ACCC are investigating this, and they will find eventually, I am sure, that this government have been gouging the people of Queensland. They have been using electricity as a hidden tax, and they have form on the board when it comes to this. Their former treasurer, Andrew Fraser, wrote a letter to Martin Ferguson back in 2009. I table that letter.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 5 February 2009, from Hon. Andrew Fraser MP to Hon. Martin Ferguson MP regarding the Australian Energy Regulator's review of the weighted average cost of capital [2036].

He had a problem then. He said that the network companies were not earning enough money and he asked the minister at the time to look into that and see whether they could screw more money out of these network companies and push up the price of electricity. The government have made an extra \$410 million from the generators in this state. In this budget, they expected to raise \$482 million and they in fact raised \$892 million, and that is not going down any time soon. I will table this part of the budget which shows that electricity prices will in fact stay up for the next few years.

*Tabled paper:* Document titled 'Budget Strategy and Outlook 2017-18' [\[2037\]](#).

I have a little program on my phone that shows Queensland's electricity price at the moment. It is \$249 a megawatt right now; that is 24 cents a kilowatt. That is a very high price for generating. That is what Labor has given us—

*(Time expired)*