



Speech By
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MEMBER FOR CALLIDE

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ADJOURNMENT

Renewable Energy

 **Mr BOYCE** (Callide—LNP) (6.19 pm): I rise to speak about renewable energy, how it affects Callide and some of the possible ramifications we will face. Callide is the energy hub of Queensland with two base load coal-fired power stations, a large proportion of the CSG industry, gas-fired power stations and at least a dozen proposals to build solar energy plants and wind farms. In particular, the proposed solar energy plant at Wandoan, the Equis solar plant, will be one of the largest solar energy plants in Australia and AGL proposes to build a 440-megawatt wind turbine energy plant at Coopers Gap, near Jandowae on the northern Darling Downs. Whilst those two proposals have approvals and also benefits for the Callide economy, I advocate caution in how we proceed with attaining a 50 per cent renewable energy target.

Renewable energy is not as clean and green as it portrays itself to be. For example, approximately 200 tonnes of coal are required to make the steel that is needed to build a wind tower. Rare earth metals are required to make the magnets in wind generators and electric motors, the production of which creates substantial amounts of by-product of highly toxic materials, some of them radioactive. Lithium ion battery storage options used in the production of solar panels also have toxic waste issues. All of those renewable energy options have a use-by date. From the moment they are put into service, they begin to deteriorate.

That raises the question: how will we deal with the waste problems that renewable energy will create and at what cost to the consumer? Will this further increase the cost of power? The whole renewable energy debate needs to take a step sideways and ask itself some serious questions about where we will end up. Are we creating more controversial problems? In a world that may source 30 per cent of its energy from renewables by 2050, has anybody considered the cost and practicalities of dealing with the waste problems that renewable energy will create? The Massachusetts Institute of Technology states—

The list of environmental concerns relating to rare earth metals is not a brief one.

Renewable energy is also highly unreliable. Solar energy plants only produce at 20 per cent of their installed capacity. Solar energy produces nothing at night, next to nothing on a cold rainy day and little early in the morning and late in the afternoon. Wind power is slightly better, producing at 30 per cent of installed capacity. When there is no wind, they produce nothing. In Australia, we have weather patterns where high-pressure systems sit over Central Australia for weeks at a time and produce little or no wind and, therefore, no power.

(Time expired)