




Speech By
Jessica Pugh

MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY

Record of Proceedings, 20 September 2018

**STATE DEVELOPMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES AND AGRICULTURAL
INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (3.07 pm): I rise today to speak to committee report No. 9, titled *Consideration of Auditor-General's report 9: 2017-18—Energy: 2016-17 results of financial audits*. As I have said before, Auditor-General's reports are absolutely crucial to ensure that our government entities are operating with good corporate governance. I want to place on record my thanks to the Queensland Audit Office for their consistent work in doing so. As is the case with water, energy is for everyone and the sectors of the Queensland economy that rely on energy are very widespread. The strawberry growers, the carrot growers and households right across Queensland rely on energy.

Importantly, the energy sector is an area of significant innovation in our economy. In Mount Ommaney, as I have said today in this House, we have many innovative businesses doing wonderful things in the energy sector, business both large and small. One such business is Super Quick Electric, with whom I hosted an energy forum on renewable energy in my electorate a few weeks ago. It was very popular; around 50 locals attended to find out what they can do to lower their power bills. I think it is wonderful to see people attending such a forum put on by a local business and a local member to find out what they can do to take charge of their electricity usage by getting solar power and batteries installed in their homes.

As we know, the importance of our energy assets and infrastructure is impossible to understate. I also note proudly that in Queensland we own ours. That is the reason that many South-East Queensland residents have been able to lower their power bills by well over 20 per cent. I have spoken before in this House about the importance of getting on board with renewables as the Palaszczuk government has set themselves the target of 50 per cent renewables by 2030, and I will speak more on that later. More importantly, the Queensland Audit Office, the QAO, identifies the importance of the Powering Queensland Plan, released in June 2017.

The plan includes a number of measures undertaken by the government at a cost of \$1.16 billion to reinvest the profits of energy generators. According to the QAO report, the measures are aimed at ensuring affordable, secure and sustainable energy. The report states—

The remaining measures are intended to put downward pressure on retail prices, and include:

- providing electricity price relief by investing \$771 million to cover the cost of the Solar Bonus Scheme, reducing the 2017-18 increase for the typical regional Queensland household from 7.1 per cent to 3.3 per cent, and for the typical small business from 8.2 per cent to 4.1 per cent
- investigating the restructure of the government owned corporation generators and establishing a 'CleanCo'

The Audit Office also noted that it does create a risk of coal-fired power plants not being able to maintain income growth in future financial years, so in response generators are diversifying their operations by expanding into the retail market and exploring alternative methods of revenue generation. We know just how important it is to always keep an eye towards the future.

I am thrilled to be part of a government that has a plan to lower power prices, diversify revenues and achieve the all-important 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2030. I am pleased to report that the Queensland Audit Office found that energy entities have strong end-of-year processes. This allows them to produce high-quality energy financial statements in a timely manner. I commend the report to the House.