




Speech By
Colin Boyce

MEMBER FOR CALLIDE

Record of Proceedings, 27 November 2019

MOTION

Bushfire Prevention and Preparedness, Parliamentary Inquiry

 **Mr BOYCE** (Callide—LNP) (5.40 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion moved by my colleague the member for Nanango, the Leader of the Opposition, Deb Frecklington, for an inquiry into the effectiveness of the Queensland government's bushfire prevention and preparedness activities leading to the 2019 Queensland bushfires. Here we go again: another session trying to convince an out-of-touch, incompetent Labor government that we need to have a serious look at how we are managing and preparing for bushfires.

What are those opposite doing? They are doing absolutely nothing. They argue that everything is okay, that nothing needs to be done, meanwhile people's lives are at risk, homes and businesses are being lost, our beautiful forests and parks have been destroyed—all costing millions. Wildlife, flora and fauna and koala habitats have been totally wiped out in some areas. Those opposite parade around as environmentalists who are nature lovers. What a load of rubbish. They are hypocrites and endoplasm who want to blame it all on climate change.

NASA scientists report that global wildfires have been decreasing—in fact, 24 per cent over the last 20 years—and the proportion of the world's population affected by fire has massively decreased. Academic studies on damage due to weather and Australian bushfires report that there is no increasing trend and conclude that there is no discernible evidence that the losses are being influenced by climate change due to emissions of greenhouse gases.

The Australian Bureau of Meteorology website provides a mass of easily accessible data. These charts show no trend in the frequency of droughts over the past 100 years, nor in total rainfall. That future warming may increase fires in Australia is speculative. What will definitely matter is where people build their homes and how we plan and manage for bushfires. Again, the trend all around the world shows that we are becoming more resilient thanks to technology and planning.

The Labor government does not want to do any planning or use better technology. Instead it says, 'Let's make sure every firefighter has a blue card. Let's fine a farmer a million dollars for putting in firebreaks. Let's cut funding to the Rural Fire Service by 25 per cent.' Hazard reduction burns have declined 75 per cent, and completed firebreaks have declined 88 per cent. These figures are absolutely shameful because the government is appeasing the sacred cow—'let's protect the environment'—and the insane ideology of the inner-city, goat-cheese-eating basketweavers who think they are environmentalists.

As a result, our environment is being destroyed because of a lack of understanding, poor planning and inaction. Australia will always have bushfires. Our eucalypt forests are disasters waiting to happen if they are not managed properly. Let us have this inquiry and get better results for the next time that this happens.

I have been the first officer on the local fire brigade for 20 years. I have recently relinquished my position simply because I am not there. Over that time I have seen the slow erosion of what works in practical terms in fighting fires, so you can take it from me that we need to re-evaluate how we do things in regard to bushfires. I support the motion.