




Speech By  
**Jessica Pugh**

**MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY**

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

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (3.25 pm): I rise today to speak to report No. 9 titled *Energy: 2017-18 results of financial audits* handed down by the Queensland Audit Office. These 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 professionalism in ensuring that these organisations are held to high standards for the benefit of all Queenslanders and to the standards that Queenslanders expect.

Organisations and sectors that rely on the energy sector include, but are no means limited to, everyday households; agriculture; hospitality; manufacturing; and, of course, tourism. I acknowledge the tourism minister, who is sitting behind me. Importantly, the energy sector is also an area of significant innovation in our economy. In Mount Ommaney we have many innovative businesses doing wonderful things with solar and battery such as Super Quick Electric, with whom I hosted an energy forum last year where local residents heard about substantial savings that could be made by getting solar and batteries installed in their homes. In fact, tomorrow I am visiting Redflow, a battery and solar manufacturing company in Seventeen Mile Rocks.

The importance of our energy assets and infrastructure in creating an innovative economy is impossible to understate. I also note that in Queensland we own our energy assets. Because we own our assets in Queensland, many Mount Ommaney residents have been able to lower their power bills by well over 20 per cent. As the government has partnered with Alinta Energy to provide strong competition in the energy sector, many residents have been taking advantage of the substantial discounts that Alinta have been offering. Others, like me, have been turning to our existing providers and asking them to match these discount offerings. I take this opportunity once again to say to all in Mount Ommaney that if they have not either looked at swapping providers or asked their existing provider for a substantial discount, in many cases like mine all it takes is a 10-minute phone call to secure a big concession and all they have to lose is dollars off their bill.

I have spoken before in this House about the importance of getting on board with renewables, as the Palaszczuk government has set a target of 50 per cent renewables by 2030. The Queensland Audit Office has identified the importance of the Powering Queensland Plan released in June 2017. The plan includes a number of measures at a cost of \$1.16 billion undertaken by the government by reinvesting the profits of energy generators. According to the QAO report, the measures are aimed at ensuring affordable, secure and sustainable energy, with the remaining measures putting downward pressure on retail prices. This includes 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 18.2 per cent to 4.1 per cent. As we now know, this has subsequently led to power price decreases across Queensland.

As part of the Powering Queensland Plan, the government is creating a new publicly owned CleanCo energy generator. CleanCo will secure a cleaner, more affordable, sustainable and secure energy supply for Queensland. It will support the growth of Queensland's renewable energy industry and increase competition in the wholesale electricity market, lowering electricity prices and facilitating a reliable and affordable transition to increased renewable energy. Part of the Powering Queensland Plan was delivering a \$386 million Powering North Queensland Plan to strengthen and diversify the north's energy supply including developing strategic transmission infrastructure in the north and north-west—

**Mr Harper:** Hear, hear! That's great.

**Ms PUGH:**—and commissioning a hydro-electric study to assess options for deploying hydro-electricity in the state. I take that interjection from the member for Thuringowa, who is a great supporter of his local area. Further, through the Powering Queensland Plan the Queensland government has confirmed its commitment to a 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2030. We are going to achieve that with the help of visionary small businesses like Super Quick Electric and Redflow, as I mentioned earlier. Thanks to businesses like these, the largest power plant in Queensland is our rooftops. It is an honour to be part of a government that has a plan to lower power prices, diversify revenues and achieve a 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2020.

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 this report to the House.