




Speech By
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MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Climate Change

 **Ms SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (2.20 pm): Last week I visited the Griffith University Gold Coast campus during O week to hear from students about what issues are important to them. The overwhelming majority of students I spoke to said that acting on climate change is a priority. They know that we are experiencing hotter summers, more frequent natural disasters and impacts on our natural environment such as coral bleaching on the Great Barrier Reef, a huge job-generating sector for the tourism industry which supports around 60,000 jobs.

If we do not act these changes in climate pose a real threat to our economy, to our environment and to local jobs. We know that there is a global economic transition underway as countries around the world move to reduce emissions and adopt low-carbon alternatives. In fact, one of Australia's largest coalmining companies, Glencore, has recently announced that it will cap global coal output and instead focus on commodities like copper, cobalt and zinc.

We on this side of the chamber accept climate change. That is why the Palaszczuk government has a 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2030 and a net zero emissions target by 2050. This has driven more than two dozen large scale renewable energy projects, mainly solar but including the largest wind farm in Australia at Coopers Gap, which is being constructed right now. We are putting solar panels and energy efficiency measures in state schools.

Queensland is living up to our reputation as the sunshine state, having seven of the top 10 Australian areas for rooftop solar-generating units since 2001. Pacific Pines, a suburb in my electorate, makes the list. We are providing interest-free loans for battery and solar panels for families in Queensland. We are establishing CleanCo, a new publicly owned clean energy generator. I want to give a shout-out to the Labor Environment Action Network for their advocacy in this space.

We are investigating hydro in places such as Burdekin. We are reinstating stronger vegetation management laws that prevent the large scale tree clearing that was happening under the Newman government. We are leading the way on bioenergy and on electric vehicle infrastructure through our electric vehicle superhighway.

While we are committed to managing the transition to new low-carbon power generation here in Queensland, all we have had is policy paralysis from the LNP Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison federal government. As the Premier said a week ago at the Queensland Media Club, 'Ideology has unseated science. Evidence and facts are simply ignored.' We have LNP members in Queensland who still refuse to even accept that climate change is real.

Clearly, the Premier rattled the Prime Minister because yesterday he did a press conference on his so-called plan to address climate change. It was nothing more than a Tony Abbott 2.0 dusted-off policy—this time with a \$2 billion taxpayer funded handout for big polluters that does very little to reverse the significant rise in carbon emissions. Even Malcolm Turnbull once branded the approach as 'a recipe for fiscal recklessness on a grand scale'. That is probably why he is no longer the leader of the LNP.

Renewables are the cheapest form of new energy generation and they are getting cheaper every year. We understand this. The private sector understands this. Why does the LNP—the party that claims to represent private enterprise—not support what the market is doing? There are billions of dollars going into Queensland renewable energy infrastructure right now. It is critical that we have governments at all levels playing a part in this transition to support regional jobs and energy security for the future.

My generation wants to see governments with a vision. We want to see investment in new sectors like hydrogen energy, which has the capacity to create new blue-collar jobs in our regional communities. The world is shifting towards cleaner energy sources and will not get anywhere until the LNP gets real and joins the conversation.

It is not surprising that the response to any bold, new idea is to incite fear, but we have the science, the facts and the economics on our side. I am more than happy to stand here day in and day out to fight for my generation and for future generations because this is our shot to be courageous to generate new industries that create jobs and support regional economies. Let us be part of a legacy that future generations can be proud of.