



Speech By
Samuel O'Connor

MEMBER FOR BONNEY

Record of Proceedings, 13 June 2019

ADJOURNMENT

Climate Change

Mr O'CONNOR (Bonney—LNP) (1.34 am): Being 1.30 am, it is probably not the time to get into a contentious issue, but I am going to give it a crack by sharing some thoughts about the environment and climate change. I do not believe in climate change. Rather, I accept the science of climate change. These are two very different things. I am sick of politicians using the word 'belief' in this debate. I think they do it to make a fight or to posture, and that achieves nothing. The definition of 'belief' is the acceptance of an idea, especially one without proof, but with this issue there is undeniable proof. Science relies on evidence, not belief. I am proud to represent at least one climate scientist, Labradorian Dr Johanna Nalau of Griffith University.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Pause the clock, please. Members, there is far too much conversation. If you are leaving, please leave. If you are having conversations, please stop or take them outside.

Mr O'CONNOR: I refer to Labradorian Dr Johanna Nalau of Griffith University. We caught up earlier this year. Johanna got in touch after I posted about 30-year-old cabinet papers from the then Queensland National Party government discussing climate change, noting almost unanimous consensus that global temperatures were rising. She engages with young people who have concerns about our climate and reflected that they think those who are now making decisions and policies will be long gone before the worst impacts materialise.

We need sensible solutions, so I welcome the opposition leader's comments yesterday that the LNP will unlock the benefits of green energy by mandating our power companies to invest in renewables. Sadly, the government has overseen not a single dollar of investment by CleanCo into renewable energy capacity. It has blocked our electricity generators from competing with renewables. That has seen workers laid off and has even threatened CS Energy's credit rating.

We need reliable baseload power and, increasingly, that has to come from gas instead of coal. Burning gas does produce emissions but far fewer than coal-fired power. That makes the government's surprise 25 per cent increase in the royalty rate for gas even more disappointing. It slugs a fuel source that we need to cut our emissions.

We need to do more practically for our local environmental assets, the biggest of which of course is our beautiful Broadwater. I was disappointed to see a \$2 million funding cut in the budget for the Gold Coast Waterways Authority. How does that keep our Broadwater clean? How does that protect Curlew Island and its unique wildlife?

I talk about light rail a lot, so I will add that it gave me great confidence to hear the opposition leader say that she will work with Canberra to finally get stage 3A to Burleigh built, after we did not see a cent in this year's budget. More people using public transport means fewer emissions. Light rail is what the Gold Coast has chosen and we need to roll it out across our city. We need cheaper public

transport fares generally. The huge costs at the moment mean people drive their cars to Brisbane, causing extra congestion and doing nothing to lower emissions. Climate change is real. We need action from across government to make more sustainable systems and to safeguard our state for future generations.