



Speech By  
**Shane Knuth**


**MEMBER FOR HILL**

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## ADJOURNMENT

### Regional Queensland, Waste Levy and Electricity Prices

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (6.59 pm): I have listened to government members pat themselves on the back and bleat about creating 200,000 jobs in Queensland. Where are these jobs going? The reality is that regional Queensland is losing jobs faster than they are being created because of poor government legislation. This is forcing small to medium sized businesses to close their doors, costing regional jobs. The state government continues to stick its head in the sand. It quotes inflated jobs figures in South-East Queensland while regional Queensland has up to 25 per cent unemployment.

We need look no further than the foundry industry in Queensland for a stark example of how poor government legislation can destroy businesses and jobs. The foundry industry could be gone within a year, taking with it 700 jobs, because of the introduction of the state government's waste levy and the proposed removal of the electricity tariff scheme by July 2020.

The Northern Iron & Brass Foundry at Wangan near Innisfail started in 1934 and is a well-established and extremely well managed business with a total output of 30 tonnes per day of iron, bronze and aluminium that supports nation-building infrastructure. This business currently employs 80 local people, providing massive flow-on effects to the region.

Regional centres are being punished by incredibly high electricity charges, which have nearly doubled over the past eight years. Businesses like the northern foundry are only just surviving in our local communities. However, the northern foundry may be forced to close its business within 12 months—and it is not because of a downturn in business but solely because of bad state government policy. I table a spreadsheet which shows the impact the waste levy will have on this particular business.

*Tabled paper.* Document, undated, titled 'Waste Levy—NIBF' [969](#).

From 1 July 2019, foundry waste charges will increase from \$64,000 to \$144,000 for the next 12 months—an increase of \$80,000 per year. I table an article from the *Innisfail Advocate* of last week.

*Tabled paper.* Media article from the *Innisfail Advocate*, dated 1 June 2019, titled 'Price hikes unbearable' [968](#).

In the article the Foundry Institute national secretary states that the state government 'has decided to remove tariff 37 from July 1, 2020'. He states further—

This will force Queensland foundries onto higher cost tariffs, increasing prices a further 40 per cent ...

Foundry owners, operators and employees are extremely concerned that these massive increased costs will decimate the Queensland foundry industry. It is government legislation and policy that is creating this mess. I call on the government to step in and fix both of these issues to save this vital industry and the 700 associated jobs in Queensland and North Queensland.