




Speech By  
**Christopher Whiting**

**MEMBER FOR BANCROFT**

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Record of Proceedings, 12 August 2020

### **FOREST WIND FARM DEVELOPMENT BILL**

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (2.00 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Forest Wind Farm Development Bill, and it is a pleasure to do so. I want to start by addressing a couple of things that the member for Maiwar talked about in an attempt to berate us for a lack of action or commitment thereof. I remind the member that when we got into government there was no renewable energy industry. There was none. Since that time we have created a whole new regional industry based on renewable energy. We on this side of the House are all very proud of what we have created under the Palaszczuk government—a new industry that is lowering electricity prices and creating jobs throughout regional Queensland.

The Forest Wind farm is another example of the innovative economic initiatives that we will be seeing more of under the unite and recover plan. The unite and recover plan and projects like the Forest Wind farm will get the economy back on track and get Queenslanders back into work into more jobs in more industries. It is a plan which will see a \$6 billion investment in industry infrastructure and innovation to keep people in work and to ensure that Queensland recovers as quickly as possible.

The Forest Wind farm well reflects the first two parts of our unite and recover plan, and that is, firstly, building vital infrastructure by fast-tracking our infrastructure plan, investing in new infrastructure and supporting private projects which deliver jobs and, secondly, strengthening Queensland's industries, including traditional ones, while also supporting emerging ones such as renewable energy. As we have heard previously and I want to reiterate, the wind farm is another step forward in reaching our 50 per cent renewable target by 2030 and we are on track to reach that 20 per cent renewable generation by the end of this year.

As we have previously heard, over the past five years the Palaszczuk government has seen 39 large-scale renewable energy projects either commence operation or financially committed, creating and supporting 5,700 jobs. Earlier the member for Miller talked about some of the projects that we have seen happening in recent times under the Palaszczuk government. We heard about Coopers Gap, and I will touch on a couple of others.

For example, in regional Queensland work has started on Australia's biggest solar farm near Chinchilla which will create up to 400 jobs and generate 400 megawatts of renewable energy. That company will sell 320 megawatts of that energy to CleanCo, our new publicly owned energy generator. I also mention the \$125 million University of Queensland Warwick solar farm. That has opened and will provide 64 megawatts. It will make the University of Queensland the first in the world to have all of its power coming from its own renewable energy asset, and that supported up to 100 jobs during construction. I also mention the \$350 million Rodds Bay Solar Farm project proposal south of Gladstone, and that passed another milestone recently in that United Green, an international company, signed up to be part of this project. This project will produce 500 megawatts of power for Queensland and the manufacturing hub of Gladstone which could translate into 300 jobs.

These are only some examples of the renewable energy boom that we are seeing in Queensland which would not have happened without the Palaszczuk Labor government. That is why this particular proposal fits in so well with where we are going as a state and fits in so well under our unite and recover plan. This proposal, as we have heard and as the minister has said—and I commend the minister on helping get this to parliament—involves \$2 billion worth of infrastructure from private sector investment which is going to provide significant economic benefits for the state, including the creation of 440 jobs and up to 50 full-time operational jobs. I commend this bill to the House.