




Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR MILLER

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FOREST WIND FARM DEVELOPMENT BILL

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (12.49 pm): I absolutely support this bill to establish a legal framework for the establishment of a large-scale wind farm, generating 1,200 megawatts of renewable energy from up to 226 turbines. How exciting is that? That would add to the Coopers Gap Wind Farm, which is almost complete—it will be the largest wind farm in Australia, here in Queensland—and the Mount Emerald Wind Farm in Far North Queensland. It is part of a renewable transformation of this state underway by this government.

When we came to office, when I was the minister for energy, not one single, large-scale, renewable energy project had started under the Newman government. At a time of plunging costs and increasing viability all around the world, not one was started because it was actively prevented by the LNP. Today we now have operational 25 large-scale renewable energy projects, and this will add to that. There is the Coopers Gap and Mount Emerald wind farms along with solar farms at Barcardine, Childers, Clare, Clermont, Collinsville, Daydream, Emerald, Hamilton, Houghton, Hayman, Hughenden, Kidston, Lilyvale, Longreach, Maryborough, Oakey I, Oakey II, Ross River, Rugby Run, Sun Metals, Susan River, Whitsunday and Yarranlea. What an amazing list of solar renewable energy coming out because of this progressive Labor government. We are getting it done.

It is amazing to hear the whingeing from those opposite—both the LNP and the Greens were in peak whinge mode—because we are getting this done. This is an amazing project that will create more than 400 jobs in the Wide Bay-Burnett region, with up to 50 full-time operational jobs. What do members opposite have against jobs? It is extraordinary. Some 80 per cent of these construction jobs will be filled by Queenslanders; 90 per cent of the operational jobs will be filled by Wide Bay-Burnett locals. We are about jobs, clean energy and acting on climate change—not just talking about it, like the Greens do. We actually get it done. We all know that the Greens stopped the emissions trading scheme under the federal Labor government and also tried to water down tree-clearing laws. You cannot trust the Greens when it comes to acting on climate change, because they say one thing but when it comes to the crunch they do another. They are just another political party, just like the LNP. It is unfortunate.

This Forest Wind farm project, if fully developed, would increase Queensland's large-scale renewable energy capacity by 40 per cent and reduce CO₂ emissions by over 78 million tonnes over 30 years. That is pretty astonishing. We are committed to jobs, clean energy and science. We acknowledge science, be it concerning climate change or this pandemic. We listen to health advice and protect our economy. This is a government that believes in science. This bill absolutely takes advantage of the latest technology and acknowledges the impact of climate change and our need to respond to it by using the latest technology and the latest developments. I am proud to be part of a government that is doing that. We have achieved an enormous amount.

Currently, 35 renewable energy projects are operational, under construction or financially committed, and there are more than 92 proposals across Queensland. We are absolutely on track to reach our target of 50 per cent renewable energy by 2030. We have been criticised often by those opposite—in both the LNP and the Greens—but we will get on and achieve, and I believe exceed, that

target. Of course, that means not just jobs and action on climate change but also lower electricity prices. We already have the lowest power prices on the eastern seaboard, because we kept our assets in public hands and we have invested in renewable energy because the costs keep dropping. We understand that. People will get more of that from a Labor government.

People have been given some relief on their electricity bills to help them through this pandemic. This is a very important bill. It is a very important project to add to our commitment to action on climate change and to jobs at a time when Queenslanders need it during the pandemic. Fundamentally, this bill would not happen under the LNP. They might say today that they believe in renewable energy, but they change their mind. Listen to their whingeing, whining and criticism in this debate. They might even vote for it, but we know that if they ever got into power they would be the same old LNP. We would have a 2.0 version of the Newman government under the member for Nanango. It is in their DNA.