



Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Bailey**


**MEMBER FOR MILLER**

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Record of Proceedings, 9 September 2020

**MOTION**

**Energy Generation**

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (5.54 pm): That is five minutes of our lives we will never get back, that is for sure! If this Katter party motion had been moved 15 years ago it would have been somewhat more accurate, but it is not 2005; it is 2020. There is massive transformation happening in the energy sector and a massive drop in cost for renewable energy. The relativities are changing rapidly. This motion is 15 years out of date at an absolute minimum. The truth is that for many years now coal-fired power has not been the cheapest form of generation.

Three years ago, the Chief Scientist of this country was very clear on this. Members of the Katter party might think they know more than the Chief Scientist of Australia. I will back the Chief Scientist over members of the Katter party on this. One thing we have learned is that the Katter party does oppose subsidies somewhere. We know that the Katter party loves a subsidy for just about everything, but we have found the one thing it does not like subsidies for. That, apparently, is renewable energy. Congratulations. We have discovered something new about the Katter party's policy framework.

There is a range of issues that I want to cover. It is ironic that these North Queensland members are railing against renewable energy when they have the best solar resource in the world in North Queensland. The costs keep coming down. Solar farms are proliferating in North Queensland like there is no tomorrow, because it is relentlessly hot with continuous sunshine. Sun Metals is running one-third of its zinc refinery in Townville off a solar farm without any storage for about 330 days a year. The outdated member for Whitsunday wants to rail against industrial development, but industry is backing renewables because they are dropping their costs. In some cases, they do not even need storage to use it. The market is moving. The last coal-fired generator in Australia was constructed 13 years ago in 2007 at Kogan Creek. If it were profitable the private sector would be in there, but all of the private sector market money has been going into renewables because the costs keep dropping massively. Storage keeps dropping massively. This transformation will continue.

Everyone loves a stage coach. There are not too many of them around these days, because better technology came along. There are not too many landlines these days, either, as we all look at our iPhones. Technology is coming. We have to roll with it. The reality is that there will be coal-fired generation for some time yet—there is no doubt about that whatsoever—but the market will continue to move. We can have nostalgic motions such as this that are simply not accurate, but we can also accept certainly realities and work with them.

It is ironic that North Queensland MPs are railing against something in which they have an incredible natural advantage in terms of cheap power. We have been backing renewables for 5½ years now. We have the lowest electricity prices on the eastern seaboard because we have backed renewable energy. That is the truth of it. That is the way to bring down power prices.

It is interesting that no LNP members are speaking on this motion. In the budget lead-up in 2018 we heard the Leader of the Opposition say that she was pro renewables. She did that without telling her party room. There was a riot in the party room. The member for Burleigh was in apoplexy. They all were not coping. She had to soften it within a month. I understand that the member for Callide has been prevented from speaking by the member for Kawana, because they do not want him to take a position that might embarrass them. It is embarrassing: to call renewable energy a fantasy is ridiculous.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I just heard what the minister said. That is a complete fabrication. This is a crossbench motion. I am personally offended. I ask the minister to withdraw what he just said about me.

**Mr SPEAKER:** There were comments made directly about the member for Kawana. Minister, will you withdraw?

**Mr BAILEY:** I withdraw, Mr Speaker, but it is a fact that the member for Kawana and the member for Callide just had a disagreement.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The minister withdrew and then said 'but'. There is a long-held tradition in this place that when members say 'but' after a withdrawal they are continuing the same theme.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I did not hear the minister say 'but', but that is correct, Minister. You will withdraw unreservedly.

**Mr BAILEY:** I withdraw unreservedly.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**Mr BOYCE:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence. The member is making some really big assumptions and I take personal offence and ask him to withdraw.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, will you withdraw?

**Mr BAILEY:** I withdraw. I notice that the member for Callide is not contributing to this debate. No LNP member has the courage to say anything in this debate. Mum is the word over there, and we know that their divisions are so endemic that the member for Callide is on his way to joining One Nation. The party room is fracturing. The record of those opposite is 43 per cent power price increases and not a single renewable energy project during their whole term in office. They are an embarrassment. I do have something for the member for Hinchinbrook. The Katter party are renowned jetski riders. There is hope: there is an electric jetski powered by solar that the member for Hinchinbrook—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister.

**Mr BAILEY:**—and the Katter party can use.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The minister's time has expired.

**Mr BAILEY:** Renewable energy is the way forward.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The minister's time has expired.

*(Time expired)*