




Speech By
Sandy Bolton

MEMBER FOR NOOSA

Record of Proceedings, 9 September 2020

MOTION

Energy Generation

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (5.41 pm): I rise to make a short contribution to the motion. I appreciate the intent of the member for Hill and the Katter party to highlight the needs of regional communities and to secure cheaper electricity for Queenslanders. However, there is a path that has been determined over some years now, whether that be to hit nominated targets internationally or here at home via the federal government's nationally determined contributions or Queensland's efforts. As I recently spoke of in this chamber, the path to renewables is not without its challenges, including impacts to birds, amenity to residents and the question of how to repurpose those panels and batteries as well as blades from the wind turbines.

However, we should be concerned about what the fallout may be should subsidisation be removed from renewables, as the motion calls for. Reportedly there are approximately 108 large-scale clean energy plants in the development pipeline throughout Queensland. Would they proceed? We could be left with a job half done and potential failure to get to that projected cheaper and cleaner power. My contribution is not around the 'should' or 'could' as within my community the viewpoints on the efficiency of renewables are diverse and deserve the respect of an appropriate platform and independent analysis to properly debate, which is not possible in this motion.

My question is: after we have gone through some really tough times in the infancy of renewables, including power prices that increased as a result of the initial efforts, why would we change strategy midstream and what would be the costs to Queenslanders and taxpayers across Australia as this has not been a simple or cheap exercise and the extensive investment so far could be lost? As always, I support regional Queenslanders and their needs, including jobs. However, if we are to do our job properly we should be able to do this by investing in their regions and in the sectors we need to grow as part of a Queensland made focus, which includes manufacturing items that currently we source from overseas and those clean energy plants.

Even though I will always support efforts for cheaper electricity on behalf of my community and acknowledge the role that coal has played throughout our history and will play during our transition, I cannot support the removal of subsidies in the journey to renewables at this time.