




Speech By
Stephen Andrew

MEMBER FOR MIRANI

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Regional Queensland, Projects

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (2.37 pm): Queenslanders today pay some of the highest electricity charges in the world. In the past 10 years, we have seen rises of 70 per cent in electricity for residential households and 90 per cent for some industries. Anything that can be done to reduce these sky-high energy costs should be the No. 1 priority of this government. Top of the list should be the lifting of Queensland's tight restrictions on 'energy saving' products, like air conditioners and refrigeration that use hydrocarbon refrigerants. As a zero ozone-depleting substance that generates almost no CO₂ emissions, hydrocarbons are far more energy efficient than any other refrigerants and have been estimated to save consumers up to 54 per cent in energy costs.

For the elderly or those on a pension, this represents a saving of hundreds of dollars each year. That amount can easily be the difference between having the heating on during winter or not. With some initiative, a whole industry could be set up to manufacture hydrocarbon products in one of Queensland's regional centres. Hundreds of millions of dollars could be made through export related sales to nearby Asian and Pacific countries, where low-energy refrigerant products are desperately needed.

There are many other wealth and job-creating projects like this that the government should be sponsoring. In my own electorate of Mirani, we are pushing for a proper rehabilitation of the historic Mount Morgan Mine site area that will revitalise the heritage areas and the town of Mount Morgan and create hundreds of jobs for the region. A leader in mine rehabilitation has prepared a best practice option for fixing the mine's toxic legacy, turning it into a world-class tourist attraction and a money-making mine again.

Fifty per cent of the funding needed has already been secured from the private sector and all we are asking is for the Queensland government to match it. Twice now I have tried to arrange a Zoom meeting with Minister Lynham, but I am still waiting on a response back from him. It is actually laughable that this government chose to spend \$8 million creating a Rehabilitation Commissioner, but when it actually comes to doing something constructive and positive about mine rehabilitation in Queensland the earthworms in my front yard are making more noise.

Another priority area is fixing the many stability and loss issues affecting our power grid. Currently, Queensland's energy system in regional areas is an absolute shambles. The Australian Electricity Market Operator, AEMO, issued warnings to 12 renewables last month, saying that if they did not significantly curtail their output they risked having it slashed to zero.

In regional areas, power outages are now a regular occurrence. Yesterday saw yet another mass power outage, stretching all the way from Blackbutt to Cadarga, which left 20,000 people without power. If the LNP are wondering why the member for Callide, Col Boyce, crossed the floor on Tuesday, they need only take a drive north or out west.

People in regional Queensland have been crying out for someone to take a stand on their behalf for I do not know how long. Right now, though, we need to focus all our attention on driving growth, jobs and cheaper energy in this state. Without those, we will continue to backslide economically.