




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MIRANI

Record of Proceedings, 9 September 2020

MOTION

Energy Generation

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (5.31 pm): There are very few renewables in this country or any country without the use of coal. Australia's energy market is a shambles. More than \$60 billion has been frittered away on wind and solar projects that rely entirely on generous government grants and other support measures to survive. Since 2017 there has been over \$3.2 billion invested in Queensland's renewables sector, while government subsidies for renewable energy schemes—such as rooftop solar panels and wind farms—have been estimated to cost electricity consumers up to \$21.6 billion in 2020.

According to a report commissioned by One Nation and carried out by Dr Alan Moran—which we are very proud of and which Mr Boyce has already spoken about—the true financial burden of these policies on households and industry is shocking. These hidden costs have been driving up the cost of living across the board, including electricity, food, water and transport. Dr Moran's report states that the total annual cost to households has been in the order of \$13 billion, or some \$1,300 per household.

Another report carried out by Principal Economics calculated that there will have been an opportunity cost—money that could have been invested elsewhere—to Queenslanders of somewhere between \$34 billion and \$36 billion in 2020-21. These are the additional costs paid by energy consumers—the households, domestic firms and exporters, such as the mining and agricultural sectors. For too long, Australians and Queenslanders have been kept in the dark regarding the true cost of climate policies that lay behind the spiralling cost-of-living expenses we are forced to deal with on a daily basis. Today we are in the middle of a power-pricing and supply calamity which has had a disastrous consequence on businesses, agriculture, households and industries like manufacturing and minerals processing.

The government's primary vehicle for implementing its climate ambitions, headlined by a renewable energy target of 50 per cent by 2030, is the new government owned renewable generator CleanCo. CleanCo was given \$250 million by the Queensland government and we are told it will be building a gigawatt of new renewable generation by 2025. The *Australian Financial Review* reported late last year that the Palaszczuk government has decided to bring forward the closure date of the 700 megawatt Callide B Power Station by a decade to 2028.

As wind and solar penetration into Queensland increases, costs increase and the whole power grid in Queensland is struggling to cope with the flood of renewable power that is deluging its system. The new wind farm in my electorate of Mirani has 159 turbines and will cost our state close to \$120 million each year to subsidise. The Australian Energy Market Operator, the AEMO, issued its first warnings back in March, saying that the output from renewable companies was causing massive instability and power transmission loss across the grid.

The system is a total mess across the sector. There is frustration and tension building between renewable developers, transmission grid owners, market operators and not least the public. The AEMO recently declared the North Queensland and Central Queensland regions as a designated 'system

strength gap'. They have set a deadline of 31 August 2021 for Powerlink to carry out an investigation and ensure that the necessary system strength services are put in place to address the faults. They also issued notices to more than a dozen Queensland solar and wind companies—most in the central and north region—saying that, if they did not significantly curtail their output, they risked having it slashed to zero. This tells us what the government and media will not. All these renewables are 100 per cent reliant on the fast-diminishing number of baseload power facilities in this state that are still powered by coal or gas.

Without reliable and affordable power, Australia's energy-hungry industries are doomed. Farmers are going broke, and butchers and pubs are closing. We are seeing everything going the wrong way. We should also be using some of the night-time power for staging up water, charging batteries and doing hydro dams. That would make coal so much easier and so much better. I am all for renewables. I can work with that—solar panels have their own place—but we need to get the true cost of what it actually costs us. We need to compare it in this House. We also need to know where everyone in the House sits on this. In one place they are eating coal on their Cornflakes, but in the next place they go to they do not want to know anything about it.

We have a lot of people relying on coal. Renewables are relying on coal. The whole state relies on coal—the mining industry, the farming industry and everything else that runs in this. We know this from what is happening in COVID. We need to make sure that at the election everyone in Queensland knows what both major parties stand for. The parties need to stand by what needs to be done for Queensland's future—that is backing the coal industry, backing coal-fired power and making sure our agricultural sector is safe in this state.