




Speech By
Bart Mellish

MEMBER FOR ASPLEY

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT

Climate Change

 **Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (2.27 pm): Few federal governments in the developed world in the last 10 years have done more to stifle efforts to combat climate change globally than this Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison government. Ever since Tony Abbott thought that campaigning against climate change was a vote winner, this federal government has been parroting every wacky line on the environment and giving airtime to every crank and windbag, so much so that refusing to take action on climate change is now fused into their DNA. We are probably one of the only countries in the world to undo emissions reduction measures, to the perverse enjoyment of the LNP.

Let us not forget that if it were not for the Greens siding with the Liberals and Nationals to vote down the earlier emissions trading scheme legislation, we might have averted the last 10 almost years of inaction. Ahead of COP26 in Glasgow, the Prime Minister is umming and ahhing about whether he will even bother to show up. He is happy to holiday in Hawaii. He is happy to go to visit a few pubs in England, but he does not want to do the quarantine to go to what has been described as the most important climate meeting in a decade—what Prince Charles described as the last chance saloon for the planet.

We have a Prime Minister too scared of what Barnaby Joyce will say if he leaves the country. The Deputy Prime Minister has flagged that this Sunday is D-day for the National Party in considering a net zero commitment by 2050. He even bizarrely claimed this week that prior to the Kyoto Protocol being signed, 'People played a sneaky little game, and we ended up with the divestment of our private property.' Let us not forget that the current LNP president, Lawrence Springborg, thinks climate change is caused by volcanoes. It is clear from media reports that most of the opposition federally to net zero is coming from their Queensland LNP members and the Deputy Prime Minister. This is the level of misinformation and paranoia being debated within the LNP as Australia experiences increasing drought, record temperatures and catastrophic bushfires.

Australia is vulnerable to climate change, as we all know, and we will see increasing severe impacts unless action is taken, and crucially, unless we encourage other countries to also take action. This is still being debated within the LNP, while the National Farmers' Federation, the Cattle Council, BHP, Rio Tinto and many others have agreed to net zero by 2050. Just today, the Reserve Bank of Australia said that Australia cannot hide from net zero by 2050. Deputy Governor Guy Debelle told an investor conference this morning that no matter the opinion of Australians towards the move to net zero, it was going to happen.

We have always known the LNP are environmental vandals. Now we know they are economic vandals too. We even gave them a clear and concise chance in this House this week to say whether or not they back it. Of course they squibbed it and ended up not voting either way. It is pretty weak to not take a view either way on such an important matter. They are ignoring that having a target of net zero emissions is actually an opportunity to invest in a green energy industry right here in Australia and in

Queensland and see the economy grow. This is very clearly seen by the multitude of fantastic, job-creating hydrogen announcements just this last week. Today we saw labour force figures come out, and unemployment in Queensland has a four in front of it. Embracing these opportunities is the only way forward, so those opposite and their bosses in Canberra need to get on the right side of history and stop sitting on the fence.