



Speech By  
**Michael Berkman**


**MEMBER FOR MAIWAR**

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## ADJOURNMENT

### Mining Industry

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (6.12 pm): Just a year after the horrific summer of bushfires, parts of New South Wales and southern Queensland were flooded this week by more one-in-100-year rainfall events. We know that warmer oceans and atmosphere can increase heavy rainfall events and make floods worse. Our state government knows this too. They say they accept the science, yet they continue to support expanded extraction and burning of the very fossil fuels driving the climate crisis—coal and gas.

After their election campaigning about the 18 new coalmines they approved last term, now they are bragging about having released 80,000 square kilometres of additional land for gas exploration. I do not know how many more times we need to explain this for them, but gas is not clean. It is not a transition fuel. It may emit relatively less carbon dioxide than thermal coal, but fugitive methane emissions are more potent greenhouse gases and potentially more dangerous for our climate overall.

The bottom line is that gas is a fossil fuel, and in a state with an abundance of renewable resources, we do not need fossil fuels. But do you know who does? Corporations like Santos which just happen to be a major donor to Labor. Labor take their money and then push their false mantra that 'what's good for fossil fuels in Queensland is good for Queenslanders'. It is an age-old lie and they keep falling for it. They fell for it when they approved the Adani mine. Even former cheerleaders for Adani, like the Isaac Regional Council, have 'lost patience' with that dodgiest of companies. Many of us lost patience long ago with these multinational fossil fuel corporations which accumulate billions in profits exploiting our shared resources, and trashing our climate at the same time.

In the same year that one in four Queenslanders lost work, thousands were homeless and household debt piled up, the Adani CEO increased his wealth by more than \$20 billion—I repeat: \$20 billion—yet his company cries poor to the government, and they fall for it. Their secret royalties deal effectively gives Adani a special low-interest loan. Their freeze on mining royalties means less funding for health, education and housing in Queensland.

How do these corporations use their billions? They try to bribe, bully or silence anyone that gets in their way. Companies like Adani will bankrupt and pursue traditional owners defending their land and ordinary people standing up to their mine, with SLAPP suits and legal intimidation. They offshore and hide their profits and use their power to pay the paltry fines levelled on them for repeated legal violations. I table a dossier prepared by Adani Watch late last year on various human rights, cultural and environmental violations perpetrated by this corporation.

*Tabled paper:* Adani Watch: Bob Brown Foundation Action for Earth Report titled 'Dossier on the Adani Group's environmental and social record', preliminary edition, October 2020 [414](#).

There is a clear pattern here, and it is a pattern facilitated by this government's dogmatic loyalty and kowtowing to fossil fuel companies. If only they made as much effort for the ordinary Queenslanders that they are meant to represent.