




Speech By
Michael Berkman

MEMBER FOR MAIWAR

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ADJOURNMENT

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Climate Change

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (7.18 pm): When it comes to climate change, this government seem really scared but it is not the same fear I feel or that I see in my kids' faces or that I heard in the voices of the kids who spoke at last week's climate strike. They are not scared about the crisis unfolding before our eyes—the devastating floods, the catastrophic bushfires, the disappearing islands and the displacement, famine and war that will come with unconstrained global warming.

Labor's fear lies elsewhere. They are scared of upsetting coal and gas donors, they are scared of an unflattering headline in the *Australian*, they are scared to tell the truth to workers and communities reliant on fossil fuels—the truth that change is coming. They are scared because they know they will not even meet their pitiful 50 per cent renewables target by 2030 or net zero emissions by 2050 unless they change tack drastically.

I think they are scared to admit that they were wrong. The best Labor can consistently do on climate change is to accept that the science is real. Great, but there are no prizes for accepting the basic science or for being marginally better than the climate deniers in One Nation and the LNP. How about accepting the findings of the International Energy Agency's report released last week that to reach net zero emissions by 2050 we cannot be approving new coal or gas projects?

Let's unpack that a little bit and start by recognising that the IEA actually exists to support the fossil fuel industry; this is no group of radical climate activists we are talking about. The IEA's starting point for this report is that we need to achieve the global target of net zero emissions by 2050 to give us an even chance of limiting global temperature rise to 1½ degrees Celsius, as the IPCC has told us countless times before. It accepts the current pledges under the Paris Agreement fall well short of what is required to achieve that goal and spells out that to achieve that goal we need no new coal or gas. That should be a massive wake-up call, but the government is still bragging about approving new coalmines and gas fields.

We are now at the point where every new coalmine or gas project approved is a denial of the facts and a betrayal of our children's future. Maybe it is scary to sit down and have that conversation with workers now, and clearly the energy minister thinks so based on the speed with which the Stanwell CEO disappeared after he dared to talk about the early retirement of coal generators. It is even scarier to see this government putting its foot on the accelerator as we careen towards climate collapse with stranded assets and mass unplanned redundancies in a defunct fossil fuel sector.

Change is hard. It can be scary, but it can also bring hope. We have an opportunity now to plan for a Queensland that leads in future industries like renewable energy and green steel and that supports displaced fossil fuel workers with free retraining, guaranteed jobs and housing and other supports for their communities. We will never achieve that future and all that is possible in this state if this government continues to live in fear.