



Speech By
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MEMBER FOR TRAEGER

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT

Energy

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (2.43 pm): I want to refer to an article in the paper referring to APA blasting CopperString—with a \$10 billion market capitalisation of APA. It is a \$10 billion company saying, 'We've got a monopoly out there and we want to maintain that in the north-west. How dare anyone connect us to the grid and provide competitive power prices to the north-west to stimulate mining activity.' The minister was here today saying it is fantastic, with Evolution Mining. That is true. That is good, but they do that on the proviso that the government is going to stimulate by spending money on infrastructure and moving forward with these things. We are all stuck on a business case for the transmission line. The government should build the things themselves. The government built the great northern rail line. There is an option there to take over the transmission line right now—take over it, build it and stimulate economic activity in the future.

What interests me with all this talk about hydrogen is that you need some base load. You need thousands of megawatts pumped into the grid somehow to make this hydrogen work. That is a fact. You need thousands of megawatts. That cannot come from renewables. You are not making thousands of megawatts there. You need base load. As far as I am aware, no-one will be game to build another coal-fired power station, which I have no problem with and the KAP has no problem with. Seriously, no-one here wants to build any more coal-fired power stations, so you have to consider nuclear energy. We have the third biggest deposits in the north-west of Queensland. The technology is advanced well beyond the time when anything else was built. You build the transmission line and you pump this into the grid. It is a nice stable environment in those arid climates where there is not a high population. There are stable environmental conditions. There is a two-kilometre hole in the earth that will not be used in future years as they go to open pit operations out there.

Why are we not talking about that? You are going to need some base load from somewhere to power this hydrogen stuff. Please tell me where it is going to come from. You need the transmission line and you need nuclear energy. That will stimulate manufacturing in the future. We are digging this out of the ground right now in Queensland and Australia. We should be value-adding to it. We held onto the copper smelter just by the skin of our teeth, but we do not have many value-adding plants left.

We need to provide competitive energy. There are high energy prices in Europe now so we can no longer say we have the highest energy price in the world, but we did and we still have extremely high energy prices. Industrial users out in the north-west are paying \$200 a megawatt hour, while someone on the grid is paying \$50 or \$60 a megawatt hour. How on earth are we expected to compete in the future if that is allowed? The way to not do that is onto the grid. APA came out and said this a day before their plant went down and millions of dollars was lost. The whole copper smelter shut down for over a day. Why? Because we are not connected to the grid. Connect us to the grid. Build the infrastructure that we need in Queensland.

(Time expired)