




Speech By
Robbie Katter

MEMBER FOR TRAEGER

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ADJOURNMENT

CopperString 2.0

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (7.19 pm): I rise to once again speak about CopperString. I commend the Queensland government for recognising the role of critical minerals in the north-west to the global economy and the development of the hydrogen industry, which I am yet to be convinced of but am optimistic about. The government has recognised that these critical minerals need secure and affordable electricity to be developed in the North West Minerals Province. This should be an easy move to make. It should have been easy to decide on a long time ago.

Prior to the federal budget, the Treasurer in this House urged the Prime Minister to provide funds for the CopperString transmission network to connect with the North West Minerals Province and the grid near Townsville. When Josh Frydenberg did not deliver that, the Treasurer in this House said that Scott Morrison had 'given up on Queensland'. The Treasurer had also requested funding for renewable energy, transport, housing and health and said that the Morrison government had failed to deliver that. Anthony Albanese has made no commitment at this point. Does the Treasurer say that Anthony Albanese has given up on Queensland? This is a major project, so we need to hear the Treasurer putting pressure on his federal counterparts to make some commitment. Have they given up?

There have been plenty of commitments on the Olympic Games—we know that is important to the federal opposition, the federal government and the state government—but CopperString does not do anything for my power bill at home in Mount Isa. It does not give us a new sportsground or access to a big sporting event; it helps create wealth to pay for these things. I am here pushing for CopperString to help Queensland and the rest of the country to generate some wealth to pay for this stuff. It should be easy. If we grow this minerals province, as we are advocating in the House, this project should pay for itself. This should have been ticked off a long time ago. The pressure should now be on the federal opposition to commit to this as well; otherwise, there is hypocrisy in this House from the Treasurer and they have also given up on Queensland.

Right now, mines in the North West Minerals Province pay \$350 a megawatt hour for diesel generated power. Mines on the east coast pay an average of \$70 a megawatt hour. Mines are paying two to three times as much out there. How can government members expect to have a great future in base metals—the Deputy Premier talked about it today—if you do not commit to building this infrastructure? There has been some good commitment from the government to this point, but it still is not there. It should have been done 10 years ago. We need a commitment from the federal Labor opposition to stop talking about it and build this infrastructure. We need to make it happen to unlock north-west Queensland.