




Speech By
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GAS SUPPLY AND OTHER LEGISLATION (HYDROGEN INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (5.12 pm): I rise to speak on the Gas Supply and Other Legislation (Hydrogen Industry Development) Amendment Bill 2023. In the context of world energy supply, this bill is really important to providing a stable industrial framework of regulation to allow those who wish to go into the industrial production of hydrogen to have a clear pathway for the transportation and storage of hydrogen for domestic, industrial and export use—all of which we anticipate will be a big part of our future.

We see that Japan and Korea, two of the powerhouses of East Asia, are very keen to have hydrogen, and indeed imported hydrogen, play a big part in their industrial economies. These are not small economies; nor are they unsophisticated economies. They are making a hard mark estimation of where their energy needs can come from and they are looking for stable, well-regulated partners—partners with whom they have had, and will continue to have, a long-term connection regarding coal, especially coking coal. They understand that Queensland is a great partner for investment, and a great partner to continue to do business with. They will recognise that this clear regulation the minister is putting forward is an important part of having that process in place.

I heard the member for Toowoomba North make statements attacking investment in Queensland. He seemed to indicate that there was not confidence in our coal industry. The reality is: since the changes have been in place, we have seen an increase in confidence in investment in Queensland. I have come into this place year after year and heard those on this side speak about the Fraser Institute surveys of mining confidence. They would often have to cherry-pick individual parts of it to say what they wanted to say. What it clearly says—the mining minister made reference to this earlier—is that there is a big uptick in confidence in Queensland and in investment in Queensland. That is because miners and industrial investors in East Asia have confidence in Queensland and in our regulation. We spent 10 years flagging the fact we were going to get fair returns for Queensland. We have put in this network, and they have confidence that it will go forward. It is an essential part of our fiscal stability, and it offers a fair return for Queenslanders. Those investors know that we have that partnership. This, again, is another part of putting forward regulation—especially about the transmission pipelines for new gases—into a licensing regime so that there is clarity over construction and transmission. This is what our partners want. This is what industry wants. This is what those providing the jobs would want. This is regional investment for the most part. It will be taking place all over Queensland, but there will be a lot of regional investment. It is also about investment in not only export but also domestic manufacturing.

I think back to what the National Party of the 1960s would do if faced with these new situations. You would think that in the 1960s the Nationals would be all over this and would be great supporters of it. We heard all of the MPs from this side—a far cry from those who used to want to invest in Queensland, to see export opportunities—put up all sorts of barriers. Just as with any other type of renewable investment, we see them, instead of wanting to fight weird culture wars about these types of investments, putting up barriers and complaining about things.

A government member interjected.

Mr POWER: All sorts of unsubstantiated allegations about this important new step for investment in Queensland, about energy production in Queensland, about new industrial capacity in Queensland and about new opportunities in Queensland. It is really disappointing.

We used to see people wanting to embrace the challenges of investment in new export opportunities. Now we see an odd teal partnership between our yellow and blue friends over here and our green friends at the back. All they want is to find reasons not to do things with modern energy. I understand why the Greens want to attack regional Queensland—why they are not interested in new jobs and innovative new-industry jobs in regional Queensland. I find it confusing as to why the rump of the old National Party is the same. Why do they want to attack investment in regional Queensland?

East Asia in particular is transitioning away from fossil fuels for direct consumption and is looking for alternatives. That is why we are in this space. A lot of East Asian countries are reasonably careful about their energy—they are reasonably conservative about these things—but they recognise that protecting our environment and protecting industrial capacity is a conservative thing. However, the National Party have gone off on a weird radical tangent where they are willing to put ideology and politics ahead of regional jobs and ahead of that careful conservatism.

A government member: Shame.

Mr POWER: It is a shame. It is disappointing that they are willing to risk the very investment that would help their communities.

We are seeing a Trump-like cancer of tribunal politics attacking this transition. They are trying to create confusion, trying to create doubt and trying to block it. It is amazing that the National Party has become the opposite of the adventurist 1960s Nationals who had ambitions for Queensland and who had a belief that Queensland could be part of a future energy provider for East Asia. Instead, we see a backwards negative Nationals that do not want to embrace the new challenge of being a carbon-free exporter of energy. They do not want to see these new opportunities for industrial production right here from green hydrogen.

Mr Head interjected.

Mr POWER: I can hear that the member for Callide does not want to embrace these challenges. He does not want to see these things going forward. He wants to put up as many blockages as he can. It is disappointing that we hear these naysayers and these voices that are the very opposite of those who had a far-seeking vision. I want to congratulate both the Minister for Energy and the mining minister because they are embracing that challenge and looking to the future. They want to engage with our partners in exports. They want to put in place the networks and regulation that are going to drive energy and exports. That is the kind of Queensland we want to be part of—part of the future, part of driving energy use right here for industry, part of driving exports of energy that produce a world where we can meet our lifestyle needs and the industrial production that we want but in a low-carbon or zero carbon economy. I endorse this bill and am really disappointed that those who constantly want to talk down this transition are doing damage to our economy, especially to regional economies.