



Speech By  
**Patrick Weir**


**MEMBER FOR CONDAMINE**

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Record of Proceedings, 11 May 2023

## **PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

### **Island Leases; Callide C Power Station; CopperString 2.0**

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (2.42 pm): Queensland's islands are the envy of the world. In our post-COVID economy we should be showcasing our unique island offerings and strengthening the critical tourism economy here in the Far North. It is therefore simply staggering that this Labor government is failing in overseeing island leasing arrangements, allowing these natural assets to fall into ruin and disrepair, starving our state of so much opportunity.

I have heard many stories of this government's failures to honour leasing conditions for the management of these islands. This is why the LNP fought for an inquiry into the management of the islands off the Queensland coast. The first recommendation that came from the inquiry was for the department to take immediate action to cancel tourism leases where lessees have been determined to be noncompliant with conditions. That was months ago.

There is no greater example of this government's failure in island management than just north of where we stand now, at the rundown and abandoned Double Island. Photographs provided show excess mould, plastic chairs scattered around and the once sparkling pool drained of water, except for some green sludge at the bottom. We welcomed the announcement of a notice for the lessee to show cause by 31 March that they were compliant with the terms of the lease, but that was over a month ago. I would ask: where are the local members on this? The member for Barron River is a minister in this government, and the member for Cairns is the assistant tourism minister. Why have they allowed this situation to fester? Locals have told me that the issues identified in the show cause notice have not been resolved, so why has the lease not been cancelled? The time for excuses for this leaseholder must end and the minister must act.

Another example of this government abandoning core service delivery is our electricity network. It has now been months since news broke of Genuity, Callide C's co-owner, going into voluntary administration. We still have not heard one word from the Premier, the energy minister or the Treasurer. Queenslanders and, importantly, Callide staff deserve to know when the offline generators at Callide will be restored. Queenslanders also deserve to know if the voluntary administration will further delay reliable and affordable electricity supply and if government funds are going to be used to purchase the half-share of Callide C.

In the time remaining to me, I would like to place on the record my concerns about the CopperString project. I read the federal budget papers in great anticipation of federal funding for this project, but CopperString was not mentioned. The Premier and her energy minister must explain why this project has been overlooked by the federal government. Does the federal government not support this project or does the state government's business case not stack up? Queenslanders deserve an answer.