




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA SOUTH

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**PROGRESSIVE COAL ROYALTIES PROTECTION (KEEP THEM IN THE BANK)
BILL**

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (7.50 pm): On 23 May 2024, the Treasurer introduced the Progressive Coal Royalties Protection (Keep Them in the Bank) Bill 2024 into the Queensland parliament. The bill was referred to the Cost of Living and Economics Committee for detailed consideration. The purpose of the bill is to amend the Mineral Resources Act 1989 to introduce a coal royalty rate floor, ensuring regulations cannot prescribe coal royalty rates lower than those periodically prescribed. Parliamentary consideration will be required for any decrease in coal royalty rates, ensuring coal royalty rates cannot be changed without the parliament's endorsement.

Proposed new section 321AA of the Mineral Resources Act 1989 provides that a coal rate cannot be prescribed that is lower than the coal rate in effect immediately before the commencement of the regulation. There is no legislative provision for what the coal rate should be, only a restriction on a relative scale that will necessarily change if and when the coal rate changes. The requirement for legislative amendment is only triggered by a rate decrease, not a rate increase. This is a bill brought by a Treasurer who always thinks he is the smartest guy in the room—always.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Any member wishing to participate in this debate should return to their own seat. That goes for you too, member for Mount Ommaney.

Mr JANETZKI: We know that he has his eye on the top job. This performance tonight and the introduction of this bill are part of his constant audition for a different job.

An opposition member: Blocker's already made up his mind.

Mr JANETZKI: I will take the interjection. Blocker knows he will be the next leader of the Labor Party. I am not sure if the Treasurer can do anything about it. I swear that the Leader of the Opposition lives rent free in the Treasurer's head. I am certain of it. The Treasurer spends an inordinate amount of time obsessing about the Leader of the Opposition. It is bizarre. I can draw no conclusion other than that the Leader of the Opposition absolutely lives rent free in the Treasurer's head.

Dr Rowan: It's pathological.

Mr JANETZKI: It is a pathological obsession—I will take the interjection from the member for Moggill. It is an extraordinary thing. The constant barrage of personal abuse is, frankly, beneath the office the Treasurer holds.

I hate to disappoint the Treasurer, but we will be supporting this bill. It is a political stunt, pure and simple—just like many of the other stunts the Treasurer has cooked up in the past. As with all the others, this one will fall flat too. This is a Treasurer who is more interested in fake scare campaigns and cheap political stunts than dealing with the pressures and the challenges facing Queensland today, whether they be cost-of-living or any other pressures.

For years the Treasurer has been trying to run this fake scare campaign, trying hard to get anyone interested in what he has to say. Let's go back through the history. In 2022 we were asked the question in this House and we supported it. We were asked the question again in the 2023 budget and we supported it. We were asked this question again in the 2024 budget and we supported it. We even supported it in a motion before the House last year as well.

Mr Saunders interjected.

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Maryborough and member for Southern Downs, cease your quarrelling across the chamber.

Mr JANETZKI: It is time to end this facile political stunt and fake scare campaign from this desperate Treasurer. From the very beginning, we have called the government out for what this was. It was a deceitful plan but it was the only plan the government had.

I want to spend a couple of moments reflecting on the Treasurer's damaging approach to the Queensland economy generally. I have long argued that his approach to the key industries that are central to Queensland's prosperity—resources and property—is unhinged and irrational. This bill, again, proves it tonight. It is more than unhinged and irrational; it is unsettling, it is damaging and it is contemptuous.

It is unsettling for Queenslanders that we have a Treasurer who cares so little for the key industries that built and sustain our prosperity—namely, resources and property. It is damaging for Queensland that he holds the companies and our key international trading partners in such contempt. It is contemptuous of the thousands of hardworking Queenslanders whom he fails to recognise for their ingenuity in delivering a productive resources sector and creating the technology in our state that makes us the best mining jurisdiction in the world. It really is the best, but you would never know it from a single thing the Treasurer ever says.

Then I think about the regional communities that rely on our resources sector. The Treasurer is on the record, quoted on 7News in Mackay on 15 March 2023, as saying, 'Every cent of these new royalties is being invested into regional Queensland right now.' Really? Is that truthfully the case?

Mr Molhoek: It's a lie.

Mr JANETZKI: It is an untruth. We know it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Southport, I will get you to withdraw that unparliamentary language in your interjection.

Mr MOLHOEK: I withdraw.

Mr JANETZKI: If it were true, I am sure the Treasurer could table an itemised list of where every single one of these royalty dollars has been spent in regional Queensland. I am sure the Treasurer could deliver for this House such an itemised list. For the Treasurer and this decade-old government, the resources and property sectors are just leverage for cheap, short-term politics, with no regard for Queensland's past.

I heard the Treasurer try to make a number of comments, but they ring hollow after everything he has said about, and the damage he has done to, the resources sector for so long. To understand the promise of the future of the resources sector is to fully understand, recognise and appreciate the industry's history. By a stroke of coincidence, not long after the royalties changed back in 2022, I went to Gemfest in my electorate. Gemfest is run by the Toowoomba Lapidary Club—and I am sure many of us in the House have those clubs. Of course, there were priceless gems and stones on display but there were also a couple of books. One of the books caught my eye: a Queensland mining guide from 1949. It detailed the proud history of mining in our state, whether it be tin, copper, quartz or coal.

Like so many in the House, I could not resist the book so I purchased it. It tells an extraordinary story of early minerals development in Queensland. It was a fascinating read. It did remind me again that coal was one of the first minerals in Queensland to be commercially mined. Coal was first discovered in 1827 by Captain Logan at Ipswich. This would obviously explain the proud coal industry in the Ipswich region. Commercial operations first began by the Brisbane River at Redbank. Further coal discoveries followed on the Mackenzie River by Leichhardt in 1845 and shortly after on the Comet, Bowen and Dawson rivers at Blair Athol and Burrum in 1864 and on the Darling Downs, in communities where I grew up, around 1876. I see the member for Condamine nodding because he grew up in the same proud communities where mining and agriculture existed harmoniously for so long.

Early progress was slow and until the 1950s coal was produced to predominantly supply steam ships and steam locomotives in the 1800s. As Queensland rail lines expanded—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. As much as I am enjoying the waltz through the history of Queensland mining, I am wanting to find the link to relevance. I am giving you some latitude.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I know the House gets very exciting when we start getting into the history of mining. It is natural. I would like you to establish the link sooner rather than later.

Mr JANETZKI: Those on the opposite side need to hear a little more about the importance of mining and the resources sector to Queensland's prosperity, and I am very happy to give it to them.

Mr Head interjected.

Mr JANETZKI: And my geologist mate from Callide up there.

As Queensland rail lines expanded, the coal industry expanded too. It has underpinned jobs in regional communities and supported our state revenue and our prosperity ever since. The Treasurer simply does not understand what underpins the Queensland economy—the resources sector—let alone any other industry that he has sought to denigrate over his period as the Treasurer of Queensland. He simply cannot be trusted.

The Treasurer's introductory speech and his second reading speech were unhinged and irrational. I think we have become so accustomed to it in this House that it is nearly like white noise, particularly for those of us on this side of the House.

Mr Mickelberg: It's about as believable as him cleaning his gutters.

Mr JANETZKI: I have to take that interjection from the member for Buderim. His sophistry is as believable as him cleaning his gutters.

I will take the House through a couple of examples in relation to the Treasurer's contribution and over the last two years since the changes in coal royalties to point out some of the contradictions and untruths. At the estimates in 2022 the Treasurer said, 'The truth is: industry was consulted.' The Treasurer doubled down on that assertion tonight.

However, at the *Courier-Mail* Future Resources event the Premier, the member for Murrumba, revealed that Treasury did not consult with the coal industry due to the need to control the timing. Treasurer, what is the truth? Who is right—is it the Premier or is it the Treasurer? I go on. It appears that Treasury failed to undertake any modelling in relation to the changes. What revenue will be lost due to horizontal fiscal equalisation? What impact has the change had on long-term coal demand and coal jobs in regional Queensland? It appears that no modelling was done in 2022 or ever since.

Again, at the *Courier-Mail* Future Resources event the Premier revealed that cabinet had taken advice from Treasury on all of the implications of the royalty changes. What was that advice? What was the advice that Treasury gave to the Treasurer? What were the implications that the Treasurer has never revealed? Treasurer, what is the truth?

Time and time again, his fake scare campaign falls apart. To understand that listen to what the Treasurer said at estimates in July 2022. I will quote the Treasurer's entire remarks. He stated—

I begin my opening remarks today on a note of bipartisanship. In that regard, I wanted to thank the LNP members of this committee for ensuring that Queensland's new progressive royalty regime was passed without opposition in the Queensland parliament. As committee members will recall, unlike the royalty changes of 2019, not one vote was cast against progressive coal royalties nor any of the revenue measures that were passed by the Legislative Assembly in June. I want to acknowledge and thank the LNP for their support. I also understand that the recent LNP state conference voted in support of retaining the new bipartisan progressive coal royalty tiers. It is a good thing for Queensland that all parties can come together on good policy, particularly on revenue measures.

Treasurer, what is the truth? You cannot have it both ways. Time and time again, the Treasurer has proven to be false in his method of argument, personal in his lines of attack and incompetent in the delivery of a more prosperous Queensland.

I have to briefly pass comment on the ruling by the Speaker yesterday. The member for Glass House had written to the Speaker in relation to allegations made in the House. The Speaker stated—

The government members have failed to provide evidence that the opposition both opposed progressive coal royalties and do not support this them into the future.

What is the truth? The Speaker has made a determination in relation to these matters and the allegations that have been consistently and wrongly made by those opposite.

Given that the Treasurer cannot be trusted—26 times broken tax promises; we know them all and we went through them all during the 5 o'clock motion—the question is: what happens if this decade old government is re-elected next month? What mineral is next? What taxes will Labor increase? What regulatory changes will Labor introduce? What renewable technology will Labor target for more regulation—more taxes? What will it be from that side of the House? We know they cannot be trusted.

We know the Japanese were concerned about the coal royalties and the lack of consultation and the investment uncertainty that that brought. They are also concerned about what happens next with hydrogen. What happens to our international partners that are seeking to invest tens of billions of dollars into hydrogen in this state? The government of the day can, with the flick of a pen, change the regulatory environment and change the taxation environment without any consultation or courtesy to our international trading partners that are seeking to invest here. They are all worried about what will happen.

Companies are worried about what will happen with critical mineral royalties and what that could mean for investment in decarbonisation related technologies. Companies seeking to invest in the North West Minerals Province are concerned about what this will mean for investment certainty and stability. What new taxation change will Labor drop without any consultation or modelling? What regulatory burden will Labor introduce? What nation will Labor insult next, putting decades of good trade relationships at risk? Importantly for Queensland, what regional community will Labor hurt next? What is the Treasurer's secret tax plan for Queensland? We know he promised 26 times before the last election not to introduce nor increase tax and has repeatedly and brazenly broken it ever since. His bizarre sophistry knows no bounds and it demeans the office that he holds.

We know that Labor's Pioneer-Burdekin Pumped Hydro Project has jumped from \$7 billion to \$12 billion to \$18 billion, and we heard at estimates that it is now \$24 billion. Who knows what it will be next? As Snowy Hydro 2.0 highlights, it is likely to be more than \$24 billion. It is going to be more than \$24 billion. It is the Treasurer's black hole. It is unfunded and uncoded. No-one knows how much it will cost. What is the Treasurer's secret tax plan to pay for it?

All of this is despite the revenue rivers of gold that this Treasurer has received. We look back and see that the Treasurer has now collected \$70 billion more than what he forecast in his first budget less than four years ago, yet the Pioneer-Burdekin hydro project is not funded. There is nothing for that. There is a billion dollars in capital, but where are the other tens of billions of dollars coming from?

Where is the Energy and Jobs Plan funding? Thus far there have been slick announcements and glossy brochures, but where is that funding? Where is the funding for the 'cornerstone', 'foundational' big battery of the north? The Treasurer's legacy will be his failure to ensure these revenue rivers of gold delivered meaningful infrastructure or any service delivery improvements in Queensland. That will be the Treasurer's legacy.

The Treasurer has damaged our international standing with his contempt of our trading partners. Who can forget in the immediate aftermath of the announcement that then premier Palaszczuk had to fly to meet with Japanese investors and she met with the Japanese ambassador to Australia? Let's not forget the extraordinary intervention of Shingo Yamagami. That was an extraordinary intervention for a Japanese ambassador to Australia. He noted his 'great concern'. He said that the Japanese were not consulted on such a significant change and that they were taken by surprise. He used words like 'huge shock' and said that some Japanese companies were already questioning their investment in this state. That investment is significant: \$12.5 billion of our export value goes to Japan every year.

While the Treasurer may not care for the promises he makes, we do care about the commitments we make and we have invested a significant amount of time and effort repairing the relationships with our key trading partners that the Treasurer has broken. International investors are seriously questioning whether or not Queensland is a safe place to invest. Those investors who have poured decades of investment and job creation into this state are still considering if they have done something wrong.

Edgar Basto, the BHP chief at the time, said that 'the Queensland government's decision to impose a new tax ... without consultation is the antithesis of considered policy in Queensland's interest or the national interest'. We know that BHP CEO Mike Henry contrasted Queensland's approach with these matters unfavourably with Chile. All the while, Queensland tumbled down the Fraser Institute's Annual Survey of Mining Companies. Trade and Investment Queensland never knew the change was coming. The Queensland resources minister admitted he knew nothing about the coal royalty hikes until the budget was announced.

It is time to move on from this facile political stunt—a fake scare campaign that diminishes our great state. Let me state the opposition's position. The royalty change was a deceitful plan but it was the only plan Labor had to fix the services they have destroyed over the last decade. We were never going to stand in the way of funding the things Labor have attached the revenue to as that is the responsible approach. Labor promised 26 times before the last election there would be no new or increased taxes and they have repeatedly broken it.

When we say something, we will mean it. We will bring regulatory and taxation stability to Queensland if elected. If elected, we will treat our international and national investors and trading partners with respect, not contempt. If the government changes next month, we will repair our standing

and rebuild our reputation in the international investment community as an investment safe harbour. There will be no regulatory and taxation surprises under a Liberal National Party government if elected. Instead, there will be sober and methodical decision-making. After a decade of chaos and crisis from those opposite, that is what the business community and the households of Queensland are searching for and longing for.

We will always talk positively about the resources sector in Queensland as being key to our economic prosperity. The mining and energy sector is the No. 1 contributor to the state economy, the No. 1 regional employer and the No. 1 export industry. It supports the jobs for the best part of 500,000 Queenslanders and pays for the services that Queenslanders deserve.

If Queenslanders want change, they will have to vote for it next month—for a Crisafulli Liberal National Party government. We will provide regulatory and taxation stability. We will treat taxpayer funds with respect and deliver projects on time and on budget. The Cabinet Budget Review Committee will mean something, and ministers will be held to account to deliver service delivery outcomes for the appropriations they receive. We will treat regional communities, the resources and property sectors, and our international trading partners with respect. We will re-establish the Productivity Commission, because we must get the best bang for buck to deliver the infrastructure our state needs and the world-class services Queenslanders deserve. For us to deliver the right plan for Queensland's future, we need to change the government in Queensland. Next month, thankfully, Queenslanders will get the chance to do just that.