




Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Cost of Living, Electricity

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (2.26 pm): It is just like the health minister: ‘There’s nothing to see here.’ We have just heard from the minister and member for Gladstone, who must be so concerned about securing his seat. If everything is okay in Gladstone and all the money is being funnelled into Gladstone, it is certainly not getting funnelled anywhere else in the state. Why did the minister have to go on local ABC Radio and say he was going to resign as a minister if maternity services did not get reinstated in Gladstone? Why did the maternity services ever shut down in the first place? That is what I would say.

Let us talk about political spin because that is what we heard this morning right here in the chamber. Treasurer Dick came in here with a straight face and tried to say that we have the cheapest electricity bills in the nation. Tell that to the people whose electricity bills are going up year on year on year—at 19.9 per cent, three times the national average. It is the worst increase in the nation. Yet we have Treasurer Dick saying, ‘Nothing to worry about here.’

Let me tell the House about a nice couple from Buderim. They have the same usage, just like everyone else, and they are not sure whether they should turn off their fridge at night. They are living through heatwaves yet are turning off their air conditioner. These are elderly people. Their bill has gone up 31 per cent in one quarter. Yet we have this government whose heads are so far in the clouds or somewhere, but in the wrong spot—

Mr Nicholls: In the sand.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: In the sand; I will take that interjection. Their heads are so far in the sand that they believe that the cost of living is not hurting. There is a cost-of-living crisis in Queensland and there is no bigger cost-of-living increase than in electricity prices. I asked the Premier a simple question in this House today. I know the energy minister certainly cannot answer it, but I asked the Premier what the increased cost of the Pioneer-Burdekin project would do to people’s power bills, including that couple in Buderim, when those billions of dollars get put on that?

Mr Last: A pretty fair question.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It is a fair question; I will take that interjection. What did we get? We got absolute crickets and waffle. It is a fairly simple question. We know that the Premier could not answer the questions that were put to him when he was up at Eungella. He could not answer them. He is certainly not able to answer my questions about how much it will cost.

It is interesting to note that the Premier has time to answer questions on—where? On the *Betoota Advocate*. I will quote the Premier on the *Betoota Advocate* because he was able to answer that question when the *Betoota Advocate* guys were saying, ‘Premier, I don’t think that there are many jobs in renewables, are there?’ Do you know what the Premier said? ‘You’re right. There’s not heaps of jobs in renewables.’ Unbelievable! It has taken this Premier nearly a decade—

Mr Last: And then he laughed, remember.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Then he giggled. Of course he giggled; he is Mr Giggles. The Premier, after a decade, does not believe that the increase in power prices is because of the inaction from his government. We also have no clue as to how much extra this rush and cost impost for deep storage projects, like the Pioneer-Burdekin, will cost people in regards to their electricity bills.

Let's have a look. I spoke about the Alinta Energy CEO and his scathing address. He went as far as to say, 'Politicians need be to be more up-front and honest with Australians about the impact of net zero by 2050 on their hip pockets.' The CSIRO said, following their survey of Australians' attitudes to the transition and different types of energy, 'It is important to note that 64 per cent of respondents do not want to pay more for their power bills.' Of course! One hundred per cent of people do not want to pay more for their power bills.

The Premier knows there will be an increase in power bills because of the deep storage that he will not talk about. He knows there is going to be an increase. People do not want to have to pay. They are already hurting because of the cost of living. They cannot afford the electricity bills they have on their kitchen tables right now, let alone the impost from Pioneer-Burdekin. Why doesn't the Premier just be honest with Queenslanders?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Before I call the next speaker, member for Nanango, you used an incorrect title. I ask you to withdraw that. I ask members to only use correct titles in this chamber.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I withdraw.