




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR CALOUNDRA

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CHEAPER POWER (SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL)

 **Mr HUNT** (Caloundra—ALP) (10.09 pm): I rise to speak about the groundbreaking cost-of-living measures announced by the Miles Labor government. The LNP might not be able to comprehend the cost-of-living challenges facing Australians at the moment—and they certainly do not seem to understand that rebates provide real relief for families—but this government certainly does. From Tina we hear, ‘Thank you so much. My next bill will be really high because we had family staying with us for three months.’ From Clodagh we hear, ‘So pleased that miners are made to pay appropriate taxes.’

When Minister Glenn Butcher was in Caloundra recently, we met Glenn and Betty, a lovely married couple on the pension, living in Nirimba. Glenn from Nirimba was a former fitter-and-turner from Gladstone. When he met Minister Glenn, also a former fitter-and-turner from Gladstone, they had much to chat about. Glenn and Betty invited us into their home and offered us a cup of tea. We ended up standing in the garage of the family home while the two Glenns examined the very large lathe lying up against one wall and I pretended to follow the conversation like I had even the slightest idea about metalwork—which I do not. Glenn and Betty showed us a few of their household bills and they were absolutely delighted at the idea that they would not have to be concerned about power bills for the next financial year. For families of all ages, but particularly our older Queenslanders, relief from financial pressures is a visible and palpable load off their minds. Sometimes we can quite literally see worry disappearing from their faces.

Labor is offering help that the LNP can never commit to, because it does not support the budget measures that underpin the relief. No progressive coal royalties equals no cost-of-living help. Perhaps the most obvious sign of relief was the chat I had with Les. Les is a single-income pensioner living on the Sunshine Coast. Les waited patiently to chat with me while I was at a community event the week before last. He asked if he could speak with me privately. I thought I was about to get a lecture on something he was unhappy about. He started out by saying, ‘I just want to thank you for the electricity rebates.’ He said, ‘It is just me and I am tired.’ Les started that sentence three times. ‘I am tired,’ he said over and over again. He kept choking up with raw and genuine emotion every time. When he finally got it out he said, ‘I am tired of just making it over the line every single week.’ He went on to say, ‘This will mean I can just breathe a little. I can live like a real person every now and again.’ To Les I say, ‘Les, you are a real person and we have listened to you and tens of thousands like you.’

Cost-of-living relief is not just a monetary windfall; it is about giving our most vulnerable Queenslanders a chance to enjoy moments of humanity that some of us take for granted. It is not a rebate; it is a ladder from life as it is to life as it should be.