




Speech By  
**Jessica Pugh**

**MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY**

---

Record of Proceedings, 11 September 2024

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

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (8.43 pm): I am delighted to rise in support of this bill because it lays bare the choice facing Queenslanders in just over a month. I back our progressive coal royalties for a couple of important reasons. One, it is paying for critical government initiatives like free kindly and more FairPlay vouchers—I will speak more on that later. Secondly—this is important—these resources are owned by Queenslanders. We are proud to make resource companies pay their fair share because Queenslanders need and deserve to have those profits—right now they are super profits—invested back into our community. I have been out knocking on doors, like many members of this House, and nobody has said to me yet that Queenslanders do not need our royalties and that they do not want the services and the infrastructure that those royalties are paying for. But what they do say is, ‘Wow, I am so happy about the 50-cent fares, it is making a huge difference for my family. We are able to afford all kinds of things that we were not able to afford before. It is making a huge difference to my family budget,’ and that is fantastic.

**Mr Head** interjected.

**Mr BAILEY:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Callide is incessantly interjecting. I cannot hear the member for Mount Ommaney who is only three seats away from me.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Millar. I will remind—

**Mr WATTS:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This is a reflection on the chair.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, members! The House will come to order. Member for Mount Ommaney, you have the call. I remind all members to cease interjections so that the member can be heard in silence. Member for Millar, I will be looking over towards the member for Callide.

**Ms PUGH:** Thank you very much for your protection, Mr Deputy Speaker. As I was saying, the 50-cent fares have been an absolutely huge hit in my electorate. I am sure every Queenslanders is enjoying the \$1,000 energy rebate. Of course, that money comes from our coal royalties. We have our FairPlay vouchers: \$200 per child is now available. In an exciting move that I know a lot of people in my community and right across Queensland are excited about, the criteria for those vouchers has been amended so that more Queensland kids can apply. As of yesterday, I am excited to share that thousands of FairPlay vouchers are still available for Queensland kids who are looking to take up a summer sport like cricket, or to come back and play soccer again next winter.

I am also excited to see a record number of those vouchers go to young women, thanks to the significant effort of our Miles government to lift the number of young women playing sports. After the efforts of our Matildas last year, a record number of those vouchers will go to young women. A lot of soccer clubs in my area have had a record number of female players over the last year. A lot of those players, when I handed out their trophies last Sunday, were using FairPlay vouchers. These royalties

are making a real difference to families in Mount Ommaney and to families right across Queensland. It is helping kids stay healthy, it is helping kids stay fit and it is engaging them in important activities in their community—learning to volunteer and umpire and to be part of something bigger than themselves, which is kind of like what being in a political party can be like sometimes. I am excited to see a record number of FairPlay vouchers go out to communities right across Queensland. Anybody who has a car will be excited about the fact that they can get 20 per cent off their rego.

**Mr Tantari:** How much?

**Ms PUGH:** It is 20 per cent, member for Hervey Bay—20 per cent! It is pretty exciting. In my humble opinion, it is almost as good as those 50-cent fares. There are so many wonderful initiatives. I have not even started on the school infrastructure that these royalties will be assisting to fund. I know that all members of this House are aware of my passion for the free kindy program because all of our young people need to start school on a level playing field. Free kindy ensures every single Queensland child has the opportunity to access a kindergarten education program. That is so important because we have preppies who have never sat in a classroom a day in their life; then we have children who have been part of an early childhood learning centre from a young age who have had very different socialisation and education experiences.

This gives those children the opportunity to access that early learning program, and there are so many wonderful centres in Mount Ommaney, both traditional kindy models such as the C&K or Lady Gowrie model and long day care models, that offer that free kindy program because they meet the criteria. I know that a lot of centres have worked very hard to meet that criteria and offer that service. I cannot speak enough about how proud I am of the free kindy program and the fact that it is funded because of things like our progressive coal royalties. It is just so important for Queensland kids.

We have fantastic classrooms coming up out of the ground right across Queensland. We are even building some fantastic new schools as well. I am always hearing from the member for Logan about all the schools and school buildings he is getting in his electorate, and the member for Caloundra is also a regular offender in this space. It is absolutely fantastic. This is the infrastructure that our communities need.

**Mr Tantari:** Big Build.

**Ms PUGH:** The Big Build, indeed, as the member for Hervey Bay says. This is the infrastructure that our communities need and it is infrastructure that I am really proud to support.

As I said, when I am out knocking on doors and when I am at train stations, I hear how the 50-cent fares have been an absolute game changer for so many people in my community. People are reconsidering their modes of transport for the first time in a long time because there is now a real cost differential between driving their car to their place of work and catching public transport. That is really exciting because it is giving South-East Queenslanders the opportunity to really look again at their modes of transport and how they move around the city. For those already using public transport, it is obviously very exciting that they have that cost incentive as well. Again, so many people are benefiting. Even people who do not normally use public transport have spoken to me about how excited they are about those 50-cent fares. It is something that I am really excited about as a parent because my kids use it. My husband uses public transport as well. Our family budget has really benefited from it. I know that there would be people sitting in this chamber tonight who have had similarly positive experiences.

There are so many reasons this bill is so important to Queensland, and we have heard some of them tonight. Obviously, we in this Miles government have been really clear about where we stand on this legislation. We stand for Queenslanders. We believe that these coal superprofits deserve to go back to Queenslanders. This bill is so important, but what it comes down to is this: our Labor government had a choice to make. We had a choice between letting mining companies keep their record profits and letting Queenslanders share the benefit of those profits through initiatives like free TAFE, free kindy, our satellite hospitals, 50-cent fares and 20 per cent rego rebates, to name just a few. I know where I stand—that is, on the side of Queenslanders.

In the time I have remaining, can I say how disappointing it is to hear those opposite interjecting constantly. None of them can be bothered to jump up, get the call and have their say on this bill because they do not want to tell Queenslanders where they stand on this bill. They have the opportunity to jump up and speak on this bill. However, they do not want to tell Queenslanders where they stand because they are embarrassed, and that is exactly what we will see right up until election day. They will not tell Queenslanders what they stand for because they stand for nothing.