




Speech By
Hon. Lance McCallum

MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA

Record of Proceedings, 21 May 2024

CHEAPER POWER (SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL)

 **Hon. LR McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (7.41 pm): I rise to speak in strong support of the cheaper power bill. This critical piece of legislation by the new Miles Labor government will deliver real and tangible relief on electricity bills—real relief right now for Bundamba households, for our families, workers, seniors and small businesses. We are acutely aware of the national cost-of-living pressures that are being faced by Queenslanders right now. Rising costs of living are a significant burden, impacting the daily lives of hardworking Queenslanders. We know that every dollar counts, whether it is spent keeping your home warm in winter and cool in summer or keeping your business thriving.

Labor's cheaper power bill addresses this head-on by providing substantial rebates on electricity bills. Our rebates are the largest in the nation: \$1,000 off every household bill, with a further \$300 thanks to the Albanese government. The \$325 rebate for small businesses—and there are over 200,000 of them across Queensland—will be matched by the federal government, bringing that rebate to \$650. We are also extending the \$372 Queensland electricity rebate for vulnerable and senior households, which will mean \$1,672 off their electricity bill. For families and households in Bundamba, cheaper power bills mean more disposable income to cover essential needs. We are talking about real savings that can make a difference in the daily lives of households. Whether it is for school supplies for children, groceries or savings for unforeseen expenses, these rebates represent direct and meaningful financial relief, helping to ease the stress on household budgets.

To our dedicated workers, a cheaper power bill acknowledges your contributions and the long hours you commit to building our state's prosperity. Lower electricity bills mean more manageable living costs, enabling you to focus on your work and family without the worry of rising utility expenses. Our seniors, pensioners and concession cardholders, many of whom are on fixed incomes, will greatly benefit. The cheaper power bill will ensure that our elderly citizens can maintain their living standards without the strain of exorbitant electricity costs. This is about dignity and ensuring that those who have contributed so much to our society can enjoy their retirement years with peace of mind. I am proud to be part of a Labor government that backs the backbone of our local economy. The cheaper power bill will mean reduced energy costs for over 200,000 Queensland small businesses, allowing those businesses to reinvest in their operations, create more jobs and further stimulate our local economy. It is a win-win for business owners and the communities that they serve.

While the Liberal National Party claims to support the cheaper power bill, their stance on coal royalties leaves them compromised in the eyes of Queenslanders. The rebates provided by this bill are funded by progressive coal royalties. By committing to keep our publicly owned assets in public hands, we will ensure that the benefits of public ownership and our natural resources are shared with all Queenslanders. By opposing both the coal royalties and the public ownership that finance the crucial relief that is contained in this bill, the LNP reveal not only a glaring inconsistency in their position but

also a multibillion-dollar budget black hole. This contradiction not only jeopardises the financial relief promised by the cheaper power bill but also highlights the LNP's unwillingness to put people before profits.

The new Miles government has taken action to provide urgent cost-of-living relief through the rebates that will be applied to power bills. These payments will be made from 1 July to provide that urgent relief and ensure that the rebates cannot be revoked or reduced by a future government. I commend the bill to the house.