




Speech By  
**Patrick Weir**

**MEMBER FOR CONDAMINE**

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

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (3.49 pm): I cannot help but note that during this debate members opposite have displayed their total lack of understanding of how the mining industry works. It is mind-blowing. We should bear in mind that coal royalties are paid on a tonnage. It is not a profit tax. They are paid on a tonnage and it is only fair that we get our share of that. That has never been in dispute. However, we keep hearing about the multinationals. While there are quite a number of multinationals working in the coal industry, New Hope is not a multinational and Bowen Coking Coal is not a multinational. They are Australian companies. The thing I fear with royalties is that those might be the last of our homegrown miners. I was a farmer. You go through lean times and you look forward to the good times to get on a roll and build for the future. We need to be conscious that, like any other business, the mines need a little bit of a buffer.

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Mr WEIR:** Member for Logan, I think you have had a crack and you did not make much sense so I would leave it there, if I were you.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Direct your comments through the chair, please, member for Condamine.

**Mr WEIR:** In Condamine there is a mine called New Hope. We hear the Treasurer talk about how mining is still going along fantastically and that there are more jobs and money, but that is on the back of what happened 20 years ago. It has taken 15 years for New Hope to get to the stage they are at. That has only started in the past 12 months. They have put on about 400 workers. That is not because of what the Treasurer did. That is because of the hundreds of millions of dollars that have been invested to bring them to that point. It is the same with every other mine that is progressing at this moment. It is happening despite this government. It is happening because they have invested so much money over a period that they are obviously going to progress through and develop their mines and hire workers.

They talk about the rise in royalties, but it is not about just that. The industry has had one too many shocks. This government does not consult with industry. I have talked to a lot of mining companies, and the Japanese companies in particular were absolutely offended and shocked that they were not consulted on this in any way, shape or form. They have said that they would have been happy to try to negotiate an outcome but they were never given that chance.

We have heard some comments about the QRC, their campaign and 'how dare they?'. Why wouldn't they fight back? That is what they are for. Those organisations and companies represent their shareholders and that is what they are doing. They have every right to do it.

We have heard about keeping the money in the bank. This government is like a kid at the show. That money will not stay in the bank. They can spend it faster than it comes in. They have never had so much money—ever. This state has never been so flush with cash and we have never seen so little for it.

There was talk about the investment at Moranbah. While it is wonderful to get a hospital at Moranbah, Moranbah survives on coal. If the coalmines shut then there will be nothing left at Moranbah, Dysart, Middlemount or any of those regional towns. They will all be gone. While the government are giving something back, they are not giving much. When I was last at Moranbah I got in a taxi at the airport. The driver ranted about the state of the roads throughout the whole area. They are not getting their share.

**Mr Smith** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Bundaberg, you are warned.

**Mr WEIR:** I think Central Queensland and the mining areas would like to see some investment in their regions. They want to see a decent cut of that money going back to their regions. Unfortunately, that is not happening at the moment. As the shadow Treasurer has said, this is part of the budget and we will be supporting it, but I would add a note of caution. As the shadow Treasurer said, when we are in government there will be no shocks like this for industry. We will work with industry and make sure that industry survives.