



Speech By  
**Shane King**


**MEMBER FOR KURWONGBAH**

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Record of Proceedings, 14 February 2024

**MOTION**

**Miles Labor Government**

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (5.41 pm): It is certain that the new PA system has been tested now! There has been a lot of talk this week about the electricity supply industry. As a qualified electrician who has come up through the ranks of that industry and Queensland government owned energy corporations, I have witnessed how those opposite have dealt with energy workers and electricity prices. How far back do we want to go? I remember Joh sacking and removing the rights of a whole lot of them. The current mob did a fair bit of that too.

Who can forget when they decided to close Swanbank E Power Station and two units at Tarong Power Station? I do not think those decisions were made about system security or lowering costs. That was three turbines the LNP decided to close for the sake of it. What was their reasoning? We heard the member for Nanango say that it was because they needed to drive up power prices. They turned turbines off and reduced the available supply of power to increase the price of power. They certainly succeeded. Electricity prices increased by 43 per cent. That is not to mention the 160 workers who lost their jobs as a result—160 workers. They were my mates and their families. The LNP have never shown any remorse or even offered to apologise for that. It is absolutely disgusting. Everyone stood up in this place and talked about Energex and Ergon workers and what heroes they were. They sacked 160 of them and have not apologised. That is disgusting. That is not to mention the 1,300 jobs Queensland lost in renewable energy projects.

Why did they want to increase power prices for everyday Queenslanders? It was so they could increase the sale price of Queensland's state owned power stations. They wanted to fatten them up before they carved them up and sold them off. They did this knowing the impact it would have on Queensland households. I will say it again: the price of electricity went up 43 per cent. It did not work. They succeeded at driving up the average household power bill by \$440. Did they do anything to help Queenslanders who were suffering? Did they even offer to help Queenslanders who were suffering? No, they did not. They did not offer them a single cent in rebates or relief, so it is a bit rich for them to come in here whingeing about power price rises when they inflicted power price rises without even a ham sandwich for consumers—nothing.

They have already flagged that rebates will be axed when, or if, they are re-elected, saying that they will focus on 'structural relief'. We all know what that is code for. Given the chance, the LNP will slash power rebates for pensioners and sell our power assets just like they did last time because they have no plan except to cut, sack and sell. That is all they know. The member for Toowoomba South said during his contribution, 'The best indicator of future performance is past performance.' I listened well. Their past performance was asset sales, so I am glad he has admitted that.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr KING:** You want to talk about asset sales? The LNP sold \$10 billion of assets when they were in power last time. I got that from the *Australian Financial Review*. I have tabled it again and again. Did they apologise? No, not one bit.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order, members! Members to my left, I know you are not used to having the member for Kurwongbah on that side of the House. I thought you would give him a much nicer welcome than that. I would ask that you constrain yourselves so that Hansard is able to hear the member's contribution.

**Mr KING:** I am feeling very welcome, Mr Deputy Speaker. In 2015, in the aftermath of losing his seat and government, the opposition leader said that the Newman government 'failed to sell its message' on 'tough reforms' like 'asset leases'. Remember that asset leases was a term used by the former member for Callide, Jeff Seeney. He is on the record as saying leases were a sneaky way to undertake asset sales. He said that on 23 March 2010. The opposition sells its messages the same way it sells Queensland's assets.

As we have found with privatisation in other states, private corporations will shut down power stations and sack workers for the benefit of their shareholders. Maintenance and reliability suffers and ordinary Queenslanders pay for their profits. Only a Miles Labor government will keep our state owned power assets in public hands and keep putting downward pressure on electricity prices.

One of the ways we are doing that is through our Battery Booster program. With 150 rooftop solar installations every day, Queensland has the highest rate of rooftop solar installations in the nation. It is clear that Queenslanders are keen to embrace renewable energy and the economic and environmental benefits that come along with it.

By the end of last year, 827,000 homes and business had solar panels on their roof. The new Battery Booster program, which this government officially launched on Monday, invites eligible Queenslanders to make the most of Queensland's sunshine to help keep household power bills down. That is why I am proud to be speaking on this motion tonight.

*(Time expired)*