



Speech By  
**Shane King**


**MEMBER FOR KURWONGBAH**

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Record of Proceedings, 6 March 2024

**MOTION**

**Cost of Living, Select Committee**

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (5.16 pm): I rise to speak to the amended motion. As a qualified electrician who has come up through the ranks of Queensland's government owned energy corporations, I have witnessed how appallingly those opposite have dealt with energy workers and electricity prices. The member for Kawana got me right in the feelings.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr KING:** No. I understand how energy prices work. The energy price rise that those opposite mistakenly attribute solely to Callide C occurred in 2021. To jog their memories, this was the same time that a worldwide sharp increase in energy prices occurred. For the last 18 months, global price rises have been identified by independent regulators and analysts and have been attributed in the main to the invasion of Ukraine. This is not a party line; it is fact.

As part of last year's pricing process, the Australian Energy Market Operator and the Australian Energy Regulator both stated that it was global demand for energy as a result of Russia's invasion of Ukraine that shaped costs. As those opposite seem to have forgotten, the Russian government took out the Nord Stream gas pipeline. There was an import ban on Russian gas to the EU and Russia responded by refusing to sell gas to other countries. That is what lifted gas prices around the world. Gas is a key price setter in the market.

The Callide C incident also coincided with a severe weather event that impacted the ability to extract coal and get coal to power stations across the east coast. The global price of coal went from US\$50 per tonne in June 2020 to US\$298 per tonne in October 2021. Across the nation, and the globe, prices spiked.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr KING:** They do not like facts. The International Energy Agency's World Energy Outlook stated—

Spot natural gas prices ... reached their highest ever levels in Europe during the second-half of 2021 (more than ten-times the—  
prices in June 2020. The report also noted—

High natural gas and coal prices have fed through to higher power prices in many markets...

If those opposite want to say that Callide C was responsible for power prices in New South Wales, Victoria, New Zealand, London or Japan, that is a very long bow to draw. It is just not true, but facts do not matter to the LNP. It is another case of those opposite linking things that have no basis, just like their climate-denying, cooker pals have a habit of doing.

Energy prices are impacted by a range of circumstances, predominantly global, but power bills will always be lower under Labor, thanks to public ownership and our cost-of-living rebates made possible because of progressive coal royalties—and who does not love progressive coal royalties? If those opposite want to talk about responsibility for the incident at Callide C, I remind them that it was the Borbidge government that placed the design of Callide C into private partnership.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order, members!

**Mr KING:** The lesson we can learn from Callide is that public ownership of energy assets—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock. Members, I am listening carefully to the member's contribution and he is providing what I would consider to be a fairly factual and non-provocative contribution to this type of debate. I would appreciate the opportunity to continue to hear that. I will start to warn people for continued interjections.

**Mr KING:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker; they had forgotten that I have feelings. This has been the consistent policy of successive Labor governments, including the Miles government. The Miles government will never sell off Queensland's publicly owned assets like that mob want to do. We believe in investment in public infrastructure, and, Mr Deputy Speaker, you know that. The public built and owned Callide B turbines were built to last. Despite being older, they consistently outperform Callide C on reliability. The LNP's negligence has not stopped at turbines. It slashed maintenance costs by \$74 million. I can borrow some of the member for Callide's crayons and draw a picture for the member in front of me if he wants. The LNP is the only party that cuts maintenance.

**Mr HEAD:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at those comments and ask the member to withdraw.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member has taken personal offence. I ask you to withdraw.

**Mr KING:** I withdraw. Someone else has feelings, and I respect that. Electricity prices, if I remember correctly, rose 43 per cent under the Newman regime. They also succeeded at driving up the average household bill by \$440.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock. Member for Toowoomba North and member for Scenic Rim, you are both warned under the standing orders.

**Mr KING:** The LNP did not offer Queenslanders a single cent in rebates or relief, from memory. That is in stark contrast to our Miles Labor government's nation-leading cost-of-living rebates. Regional Queensland benefits from this government's community service obligation, which reduces bills on average by about \$707 a consumer. This is amazing.

**Mr Krause** interjected.

**Mr KING:** Thanks to the Miles government's rebates, Queensland has the lowest energy bills in the nation while the LNP does not have much grasp on facts and truth, and that is well known.