




Speech By
Hon. Steven Miles

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

Record of Proceedings, 14 February 2024

CLEAN ECONOMY JOBS BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Premier) (11.17 am): I present a bill for an act to provide for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in Queensland by stating emissions reduction targets and for related purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Clean Economy Jobs, Resources and Transport Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Clean Economy Jobs Bill 2024 [181](#).

Tabled paper: Clean Economy Jobs Bill 2024, explanatory notes [182](#).

Tabled paper: Clean Economy Jobs Bill 2024, statement of compatibility with human rights [183](#).

This is a bill that sets up Queensland's economy for the next century by securing blue collar jobs in our regions, in both existing industries and in new ones. It is a bill to protect the Great Barrier Reef and our natural environment for future generations. The Clean Economy Jobs Bill 2024 sets a clear emissions reduction target of 75 per cent on 2005 levels by 2035—a responsible, credible and critical target on the path to net zero emissions by 2050. The 75 by '35 emissions reduction target positions Queensland as a world leader on the pathway to net zero—a target that continues Queensland's record of having reduced more tonnes of emissions than any other state or territory. Without Queensland, Australia would not have met our Kyoto targets and now we are setting out our plan to lead the nation on emissions reduction to 2035 to meet the Paris targets. It is a target for Queensland to take the lead and a target that is responsible by supporting our existing industries to create more jobs and succeed.

When our government sets targets we act and we deliver. Our government is delivering a nation-leading investment in the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan, investing \$19 billion over the next four years to deliver 70 per cent renewable energy by 2032 and 80 per cent by 2035. Since coming to government we have already taken renewable energy in Queensland from just seven per cent to 26 per cent. There were no large-scale renewable wind or solar farms in Queensland before we came to government. Now Queensland is on the path to become Australia's and our region's renewable energy superpower. There are now 52 built or committed large-scale wind and solar farms, including the largest solar farm in the nation on the Western Downs. Soon one of the largest onshore wind farms in the world will be completed at MacIntyre. To date we have supported \$11 billion of investment in renewables and 8,500 construction jobs.

We have achieved one million solar rooftop installations, ahead of any other state in Australia. We have installed 20,000 solar panels across 912 schools to power air conditioning in every classroom. We have started early works on the CopperString 2032 project to connect the largest renewable energy zone on the east coast of Australia, with half a trillion dollars of critical minerals. Geotechnical drilling has started on the generational pumped hydro projects that will allow solar energy to be stored during the day and used through the night to power Queensland. We are not stopping there, with projects under development to create a new hydrogen industry to export our renewable energy to the world. We

have already achieved a 29 per cent reduction in emissions on 2005 levels. This bill will send a signal to the world that Queensland is determined to attract investment, protect existing jobs and attract new jobs to our state.

Personally, I first became interested in climate change in 2007, when Kim was expecting our son Sam. To be honest, until then I was a bit dismissive of conservation issues. Instead, I was more motivated by social and economic justice concerns—the kinds of topics members have heard me talk a lot about lately: education, opportunity, housing, jobs and cost of living. I came to realise then, though, that climate change threatened the opportunities, jobs and lives I wanted for our future family. Since then, it has been an essential political objective for me. Now, as the state's Premier, I think it is important to protect not just my children's future but the future of all Queenslanders.

Queensland is already the most disaster-affected state. We have experienced more than 100 disasters since 2011. They are the kinds of disasters that we know will be more regular and more intense as average temperatures increase. Those who live in the Torres Strait or whose livelihood depends on the Great Barrier Reef have lived experience of what the impacts of climate change mean for their lives and the lives of their children and grandchildren. If action is delayed now then the chances of preventing irreversible climate change become very slim. Last year was the world's warmest year on record, with average temperatures 1.45 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial baseline. If we do not cut emissions, Queensland will experience more cyclones, more heatwaves, more floods, higher sea levels and more fires. That is not a future I want for our children and our grandchildren. The targets we are setting to reduce emissions by 75 per cent by 2035 are based on science and meeting internationally agreed targets. More importantly, they will provide industry with the certainty to invest in converting existing industry to renewables and attracting new industries here.

These targets are crucial to lock in the investment needed for our economic future. This bill proposes to establish the Clean Economy Expert Panel to support the development of sector-based plans: plans to secure ongoing global investment in our manufacturing, agriculture and resources industries; plans to work towards 24-hour renewable energy to power existing heavy industries and for reshoring manufacturing across our regions; a plan to assist our agricultural producers to capture the economic benefits from natural capital and carbon farming and to access low-emission fertilisers; a plan to support lower emission technologies and capture emissions from existing mines for steelmaking coal to make them the most efficient in the world; a plan to work with the expertise from our natural gas industry to grow a new green hydrogen industry; and a plan to support vehicle fleets to move to zero emissions and create even more local manufacturing jobs in the electric vehicle supply chain.

We have already locked in significant investments towards making this happen with our \$500 million Land Restoration Fund and our \$520 million Low Emissions Investment Partnerships program. Through our historic investment of over \$262 million in protected areas, we have now increased our protected areas to over 14.5 million hectares. We will work in partnership with the Albanese government on further funding support because, like us, they have set a clear target for emissions reduction and clear ambitions for seizing the economic opportunity of decarbonisation.

Our sector-based plans and 75 by '35 target will do more than just secure the future of our existing industries. They will unlock new industries in Queensland: creating new jobs in renewable manufacturing; building on our success in securing the green energy manufacturing centre for hydrogen electrolyzers in Gladstone; unlocking a new battery manufacturing industry in Queensland supported by our Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan and our Queensland Battery Industry Strategy; unlocking the next resources boom in critical minerals like vanadium, copper and high-purity alumina that the world needs for renewable energy and electric vehicles; and setting up new renewable energy export industries in hydrogen and sustainable aviation fuel.

Queensland is the Sunshine State. We have some of the best solar resources in the world combined with some of the best onshore wind resources. We have the Great Dividing Range with world-class sites for pumped hydro and we have regions that were built to export resources for the second industrial revolution. Now we are perfectly positioned for Queensland to be a world leader in the clean energy industrial revolution. The targets we begin legislating today lay down the framework and provide the investment certainty to make this happen, to provide high-paying, generational clean energy jobs across our regions and also in the south-east. It will provide the opportunity for more young people to stay living in the regions where they grew up, in exciting careers, creating a better future not only for Queensland but also for the world.

This bill will provide the framework for clean economy jobs. It will enshrine in law Queensland's emissions reduction targets of 30 per cent by 2030, 75 per cent by 2035 and net zero in 2050. It will require interim emissions reduction targets for 2040 and 2045 to be set out 10 years in advance. We

will develop sector-based emissions reduction plans for achieving the targets and we will require annual reporting to the Queensland parliament on our progress. Finally, we will establish the Clean Economy Expert Panel.

This bill is important. If the world is to reach net zero by 2050, Queensland needs to play our part. The prosperity of our environment, our community and our economy depends on it. Our trading partners, particularly those in Europe, the United States and North-East Asia, are demanding that the places they trade with act responsibly and send them products with a minimised carbon footprint. That is why responsible emissions targets are essential to jobs in our existing industries like mining, agriculture and manufacturing, and they are the key to creating more jobs in new industries like hydrogen, critical minerals and sustainable aviation fuel.

By legislating these targets, we will create certainty for industry and for jobs. By legislating these targets, we are making a clear statement to the world that Queensland is the place to do business if you are looking to use clean energy. By working together, we can create a golden age of opportunity for Queensland. Whether you live in one of our regional cities and are concerned about keeping blue-collar jobs in your region, you live in the inner city and are worried about climate change or you work on a farm and experience the ravages of natural disasters, reducing our emissions is crucial to creating a shared and prosperous future. I am proud to be introducing this bill today. I commend the Minister for Energy and Clean Economy Jobs for helping to prepare it.

First Reading

Hon. SJ MILES (Murrumba—ALP) (Premier) (11.29 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to Clean Economy Jobs, Resources and Transport Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Clean Economy Jobs, Resources and Transport Committee.