



Speech By

Lance McCallum


MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA

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ENERGY ROADMAP AMENDMENT BILL

GREENHOUSE GAS STORAGE AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (8.33 pm): I rise to contribute to the cognate debate. Other members of the opposition will address the Greenhouse Gas Storage Amendment Bill, including the shadow minister for resources, and I will focus my contribution on the Energy Roadmap Amendment Bill.

I rise to speak against the Crisafulli LNP government's Energy Roadmap Amendment Bill. With this bill, the Crisafulli government is putting ideology above economics and above science when it comes to the future of energy in Queensland. The LNP's ideological energy war is costing Queensland investment and jobs and will result in higher power bills for Queensland homes and businesses. Their so-called 'energy roadmap' would more aptly be named 'energy roadblock' because it stands in the way of a clean energy future that lowers bills and creates jobs.

Labor's plan locked renewable energy targets of 50 per cent by 2030, 70 per cent by 2032 and 80 per cent by 2035 into law. This bill will repeal those targets. Labor enacted laws with legal requirements for a majority of the energy generated in Queensland to be publicly owned. With this bill, the LNP will let privatisation rip. Make no mistake: the LNP's ideological opposition to renewables will deliver higher prices and higher emissions and will cost jobs.

Most Queenslanders support a plan for an orderly transition to clean energy that is based on science and economics and backed by continued public ownership, but the LNP have brought forward a plan for more of the most expensive and unreliable forms of energy as they privatise our energy system by stealth. With this bill and the Energy Roadmap policy the Crisafulli government have chosen what is good politically for the LNP, not what is good economically. They have chosen what is good for themselves, not what is good for Queenslanders.

The bill and the policy will not provide consumers caught in a cost-of-living crunch with the lower power prices they were promised by the LNP. Proponents who have seen job-creating energy projects worth billions cancelled by the member for Kawana and who want policy stability and certainty instead will get more risk as our renewable energy targets are scrapped by the LNP. These industry proponents instead will be competing against expensive and unreliable coal-fired power plants, propped up by billions of dollars of taxpayers' money until further notice. Even the LNP trigger for their retirement—the so-called decision matrix—that determines when coal plants will retire cannot rule out early closures of coal units. The LNP have truly chosen the worst of both worlds.

Communities that host energy projects, whether fossil fuels or renewables, will not have any more certainty or clarity around the future of these assets under the LNP's plan. Our industries and the tens of thousands of jobs that depend on them will struggle under this backward LNP plan as they strive to keep globally competitive through clean, cheap and reliable electricity. All the while our power prices will keep skyrocketing.

Despite the promises from the member for Broadwater about cheaper power when he was the opposition leader, the latest ABS CPI data shows that the cost of power in Queensland has increased by up to 468.5 per cent in the year that the LNP has been in office—between October last year and October this year. This has been driven by the LNP's deliberate decision to cut universal energy rebates for Queenslanders. This is yet another broken promise from the Premier, who said that a government he led would provide relief, including universal energy rebates, if the cost-of-living crisis continued. Not only has it continued; it has gotten worse under the Crisafulli LNP government. It will be made even worse by the measures in this bill, which will see power prices continue to go up, driven by the LNP's ideological opposition to clean energy.

This bill has been brought before the House by an energy minister forced to deliver what is good for the LNP's internal politics. We have seen evidence of this writ large publicly. In the lead-up to the launch of the Energy Roadmap, the *Courier-Mail* reported that the LNP's Energy Roadmap would include firm closure dates for Queensland coal generators. I table the article.

Tabled paper: Media article, dated 10 September 2025, titled 'Revealed: Qld's new energy plan to set coal power end dates' [1970](#).

By mid-morning of the day of the report, the Premier's and energy minister's spinners were backgrounding journalists that the *Courier-Mail* reporter was wrong. I believe that the reporter got it right, and the Premier knew the energy minister had coal generator closure dates in the Energy Roadmap. Frankly, it is inconceivable to me that the Premier's office was unaware these closure dates in the Energy Roadmap were being made available to the media.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kempton): Member for Logan, you are not interjecting; you are arguing across the floor. Please do not.

Mr McCALLUM: So what happened? I suspect that the anti-renewable extremists in the LNP went absolutely ballistic when they saw the report that the LNP planned to shut down coal power plants and, consequently, there was a scramble to immediately remove the closure dates from the Energy Roadmap. This backflip was driven by a party that has vocal anti-renewable members, receives large donations from fossil fuel companies and relies on votes from climate change deniers. In return, members like those for Mirani, Callide, Maryborough and Rockhampton, who we know do not support net zero, quietly toe the line when they are here in Brisbane.

Make no mistake: there is a massive power play consuming the LNP right now—the anti-renewable ideologues against the more moderates. We have the member for Kawana pulling the plug on renewable energy projects, undermining the member for Toowoomba South. The tragedy is that the mixed signals, the confusion and the uncertainty are sending renewable proponents away from Queensland while Queenslanders pay record high power prices.

Repealing Queensland's legislated renewable energy targets will not only drive up power prices but also damage industry confidence, increase risk and drive clean energy investment into other states. Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory all have legislated renewable energy targets. The Clean Energy Investor Group has reported that already, under the LNP, Queensland has lost our No. 1 spot as the best jurisdiction for clean energy investment. That spot has now gone to New South Wales, thanks to the LNP.

Stakeholders have raised concerns and spoken plainly against the repeal of our renewable energy targets. The Queensland Renewable Energy Council stated—

Our core concern ... is the repeal of the renewable energy targets and the absence of any explicit reference to climate change or decarbonisation pathways in the bill or the accompanying road map.

...

Legislated targets have been instrumental in driving private investment, supporting financial models and aligning industry and government towards a shared goal. Their removal risks weakening Queensland's investment signal for renewables at a time when the state is competing nationally and globally for capital to build the next generation of renewable and storage projects.

...

... there are a number of developers who are reviewing their future pipelines in Queensland, citing the mixed messages from government and inconsistency across approval processes.

The effects of repealing our renewable energy targets will be felt far beyond the clean energy sector. Many industries are using renewables from the Queensland grid as part of their own decarbonisation strategy—industries like mining and resources. As the Queensland Resources Council stated—

... the QRC notes that the changed trajectory for renewables could require further planning and changes to investment decisions. Some resources companies in Queensland have built renewable energy utilisation into their decarbonisation strategies ...

The member for Broadwater when he was opposition leader promised government accountability and clear KPIs, yet this bill will repeal an effective policy mechanism that delivers both. As the Smart Energy Council put it, 'Without clear, measurable targets, the Energy Roadmap becomes a policy without accountability.' Replaced instead with a vague decision matrix, industry is left with more risk and uncertainty. The Energy System Outlook provided in the Energy Roadmap is not even internally consistent. The Clean Energy Council pointed out—

The roadmap's forecast of up to 8 GW of gas-fired generation by 2035 further undermines the sustainability of coal fired power stations in the energy mix where flexible generation will impact upon the economics of these assets.

The Queensland Renewable Energy Council also raised concerns, stating—

The fact that the first investment outlook has been regulated in the bill, the Energy Roadmap section 2, and the fact that there is not sufficient detail in there I think is a little concerning. We would like to see further information on that.

If we consider that the next energy road map is not due for another five years, what does that mean for the investment horizon?

Even the Crisafulli LNP government's own forecasts of increases in gas generation suggest there is no path to coal generators remaining commercially viable over the timelines indicated in their own roadmap. Let me say that again: the government's own forecasts undermine their policy and this bill. This is a government with no credibility, no ability and no clue when it comes to energy policy.

The renewables sector in Queensland was shocked when the member for Kawana cancelled billion dollar renewable energy projects. We saw the Moonlight Range Wind Farm—450 megawatts and \$1 billion worth of investment—called in. Then there was the 1.2-gigawatt \$2 billion Forest Wind Farm that the member for Toowoomba South has moved amendments for which will repeal the Forest Wind Farm Development Act. Let's be clear: what we are talking about is the government steamrolling over the top of a project where a proponent has spent, I am advised, in the order of \$25 million. This is the definition of sovereign risk which is bad for the Queensland economy, bad for local economies—

Mr Perrett: An absolute hoax—no consultation.

Mr McCALLUM: They do not like it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kempton): Member for Gympie.

Mr Perrett interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Gympie.

Mr Perrett interjected.

Mr McCALLUM: That is right. Here come the tinfoil hats. They are coming out.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Gympie, I called you several times then and you continued to shout across the House. I warn you, but just take care.

Mr McCALLUM: There are more projects that are under threat. There is the Marmadua Energy Park—700 megawatts and a 200-megawatt battery—which is under threat of being called in and also the Middle Creek Energy Hub. All up, there is 3.65 gigawatts of renewable energy that represents over \$5 billion worth of investment this government is gunning for because of its anti-renewable ideology.

Recently I heard the energy minister tell a room full of clean energy sector stakeholders, 'Queensland is open for business,' in one breath and then in the next say he 'makes no apology' for repealing the renewable energy targets. This is the kind of arrogance, duplicity and cognitive dissonance that defines both this bill and this government. This bill allows for privatisation by stealth through a framework to funnel in greater private generation as well as privatised transmission infrastructure, including CopperString, along with privatised pumped hydro energy storage projects.

Clause 10 sets different and, in my view, deliberately misleading new public ownership targets for generation and removes the requirement for the minister to prepare and publish a public ownership strategy. Proposed new section 13(1)(a) replaces Labor's previous requirement to set a minimum 54 per cent generation target to be achieved by 2035, replacing it with a very carefully worded target of 'maintaining 100% public ownership of operational generation assets publicly owned on commencement and that remain operational'—snappy but clear as mud.

These are very carefully crafted weasel words. I will expand and tell you why, Mr Deputy Speaker. Under Labor, the law as it stands sets out a legal requirement for a publicly owned generation target of at least 54 per cent of the total generation in our system—locked into law to protect our publicly owned generators. What the LNP are doing with this bill is watering down that requirement and only committing to maintaining ownership of generation that is already 100 per cent publicly owned. How amazing! They are committing to owning something they already own on behalf of the people of Queensland. What that means is that, under the provisions of this bill, new generation can be private. There is no requirement to replace retired publicly owned generation with more publicly owned generation as there would be with the existing 54 per cent overall minimum public ownership law.

The changes around public ownership in this bill are sneaky and deliberately deceptive. They set up a framework for publicly owned generators to be replaced by private ones as our publicly owned power stations are whittled away to nothing, all the while pretending to have set a 100 per cent public ownership target. That's the LNP for you: sneaky, untrustworthy and selling Queenslanders out. We have already seen this occur with the announcement last week that 80 per cent of the new Brigalow gas peaker will be sold off. Selling 80 per cent of a power station that should be fully publicly owned is a gross act of betrayal and economic self-harm. To have CS Energy buy back the power for 25 years is just rubbing salt into the wound.

I fear this is just the beginning of a full scale sell-off of our energy system. The LNP said they would not privatise Queensland's electricity assets, but selling 80 per cent of the Brigalow gas peaker to a private company is privatisation, plain and simple. It is Queenslanders who will pay more as privatisation turbocharges price increases, all because the LNP government has sold them out. The Electrical Trades Union submission made this clear. It states—

The LNP Energy Roadmap is a thinly veiled push for privatisation of the QLD energy system. The LNP is manipulating ownership targets to hide its true agenda to shift the ownership of Queensland transmission and generation assets into private hands, while substantially removing oversight of the Minister's actions.

Furthermore, the Queensland Council of Unions said—

It is a gradual abandonment of public ownership and privatisation by stealth.

Under the bill and policy, the LNP have placed a large 'for sale' sign on Queensland's energy system, despite Queenslanders being crystal clear that their energy system is not for sale. This is a broken promise by the member for Broadwater. I will quote an article in the *Courier-Mail* from last year. It states—

... Mr Crisafulli spruiked certainty, saying should he win office in October cost-of-living measures such as the electricity rebate would stay.

That is a broken promise. It continues—

It has to be in the budget and I'll put the Premier on notice—

meaning the member for Murrumbidgee at the time—

if it's not in your budget, it will be in mine.

Well, that has not dated very well, has it? The article continues—

If government changes in October, Queenslanders need that certainty that that won't change.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kempton): Member, are you going to table that document? Are you still reading from that document?

Mr McCALLUM: I am still reading from it. I will table it in a moment. On the topic of privatisation that article states—

... Mr Crisafulli was adamant selling off assets was 'not on the agenda', saying Queenslanders had made their feelings clear at two elections. 'It shouldn't be on the agenda because you've got to listen to Queenslanders,' he said.

I table the article.

Fast-forward to this bill and our energy system is up for sale. It is not just publicly owned generation that is under threat of privatisation from the LNP. This bill throws the door wide open to privatisation of the CopperString transmission line that should run from Townsville to Mount Isa. When asked if under this legislation the Treasurer would have the power to apply regulation to adjust the regulated asset base and revenue for a private transmission company, at the committee briefing Treasury officials confirmed—

Yes, it is effectively an economic regulation provision to support the delivery of CopperString and it is very much mirroring the approach for the Priority Transmission Investment framework delivered by Powerlink.

Treasury officials also could not rule out that under this legislation a private transmission company could build the western link of CopperString from Hughenden to Mount Isa. When asked if under this bill a private transmission company could build, own and operate a transmission line in Queensland, the Electrical Trades Union said—

I think it has left it wide open to do that. Whether it is intentional or not, certainly there is the opportunity for that to happen under this. All that is protected publicly is the existing transmission, so I do not see how it can not happen.

Under this bill and under the LNP, for the first time Queensland could see a privately owned transmission company operating in Queensland. Labor committed to building the CopperString line all the way to Mount Isa by 2032 whereas the LNP have only committed to delivering the eastern link to Hughenden by 2032. Make no mistake: this is a savage LNP cut. They have cut it in half, and it is the communities from Townsville to Mount Isa and the entire North West Minerals Province that will pay the price.

Worse still, the LNP government cannot give a firm date for when the western link to Mount Isa will be complete. Completing the line to Mount Isa is essential to opening up the North West Minerals Province. It is also essential to existing mining and industrial sectors in the west to help them stay competitive and decarbonise their operation. In the committee hearing on this point the Queensland Resources Council stated—

... we invest in energy infrastructure and decarbonisation. Our sector is investing significantly in lower emissions technologies, renewable energy integration and operational decarbonisation.

However, sequencing of the western link, undisclosed pricing and deliverable delivery timeframes could present issues for resource operators or future investments seeking a line of sight for the final deliverable.

The LNP's piecemeal approach and plan for CopperString means that communities and industry have been left with more uncertainty, wondering if and when it will be built all the way out to Mount Isa and whether or not it will be privately owned by a company that will be squeezing every last cent out of it.

Clause 45 of the bill replaces the purposes for the cost recovery division in part 6, section 68 of the Energy (Renewable Transformation and Jobs) Act. This new section allows for the recovery of costs associated with the hub transmission network incurred by AEMO, the federal regulator, in addition to the costs incurred by transmission network service providers. However, concerning, clause 47 inserts new section 69A, which expands on the previous definition to include—and I will read from the explanatory notes here—

A government member: Already in consideration in detail.

Mr McCALLUM: I know it is probably a little confusing for some across the aisle. Perhaps they can pay attention. The explanatory notes state—

... any costs, expenses or other financial outgoings incurred by the service provider. This includes, for example, payments to investors to provide a return on capital, depreciation, government taxes ...

It is important to note that the term 'network service provider' is not used here, rather 'investor' and 'payments to provide a return on capital'. To me it is plain that, with this new clause and framework, the LNP is deliberately opening the door for privatisation in regional energy hubs. I call on the minister to provide clarity on the record and rule out privatising the regional energy hubs. The communities where they will be built deserve to know and so does the rest of Queensland.

Central to the Energy Roadmap policy is the LNP's vague generator decision matrix mechanism for state owned coal assets that has left industry and communities with more risk and uncertainty. Instead of firm dates around retirements, the LNP have offered up the decision matrix. I quote from the policy—

This decision matrix triangulates system need, asset integrity, and economic viability of state-owned coal units.

In my view, a better description would be that the LNP's decision matrix triangulates uncertainty with incompetence and ignorance—the LNP trifecta. It seems that stakeholders are not big fans, either. Of the decision matrix, the Queensland Renewable Energy Council submission says—

... the current level of detail is inadequate to guide transparent and consistent decision-making across the sector.

In a committee hearing on 29 October QREC also said—

... greater clarity is needed on how these mechanisms will operate and how decisions such as the new power station timeframe matrix will be made ...

They also said—

The decision matrix has several instances that are a bit ambiguous at the moment and where we would seek some clarity. For example, how will system need be determined? What are the quantitative boundary conditions? What are the performance metrics? What is the weighting of cost competitiveness? What are the definitions of fuel security?

At the committee briefing I asked Treasury officials—

... using the criteria in the policy, if a coal generator was required to shut down would it be the department's recommendation that it do so, so there would be advice provided to the minister?

The response was—

Yes, you are right; the Energy Roadmap includes a decision matrix to inform executive government consideration around the operation of coal assets. Those factors relate to system need first and foremost, asset integrity and economic viability.

I then asked if it was correct the coal generators could be closed much earlier if the decision—

Debate, on motion of Mr McCallum, adjourned.